THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

LIVING THEIR FAITH:

Identity and Mission among West Indian immigrants in Pentecostal churches in New York City and London

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own independent work and constitute the results of my research. I also certify that due acknowledgment has been made in the text to all other materials used.

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March, 2009

Abstract

The last sixty years have seen the emergence of three particular developments that are currently exerting tremendous effects on the shape, articulation and practice of World Christianity. These are: the demographic shift in Christian adherence from the North to the South; the rapid expansion of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement in various places around the globe, particularly in the South; and the growth of migration from many two-thirds world nations to first world countries. In their interaction, these developments have produced a plethora of new religious expressions within World Christianity – specifically the presence of non-Western Christianity in the North. For as Non-Western immigrants migrate to the West, they bring with them a vibrant religious life which they use to navigate the terrains of the new society.

This thesis delineates the experiences of West Indian Pentecostals living in New York City and London as they engage with their host societies. It explores the manner in which several generations of immigrants are constructing and re-negotiating their ethnic and religious identities. The thesis reveals that both the home country and the Diaspora context play a vital role in this process of identification. This is especially notable for the immigrant children who can be seen as constituting the frontline in terms of cultural and social change. This study also highlights the process by which 'mission' is being conceptualized and practiced within these Diaspora faith communities. The findings indicate that mission – its conceptualization and practice –is also a product of the West Indian and Diaspora contexts. However, this re-conceptualization is conducted within the framework of a re-definition of the local and global dimensions associated with the term. As a result, the translational process becomes one of dynamism and constant negotiation as the ideas emanating from home and the host societies are able to critique and influence each other.

This thesis clearly reveals that Diaspora faith communities occupy a significant position within the lives of their members. They are sites of dynamism, where members access social and cultural capitals; maintain transnational ties; interact with the Diaspora context; and live out their faith. Therefore, this thesis argues that these faith communities function as a bridge connecting the home country and the Diaspora context, enabling their members to retain certain aspects of the ethno-religious identities and the cultures of their homelands, while equally, assisting them to adjust to, and create a place of belonging within the new society.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated in memory of two special people: my grandmother Mrs. Viola McLean, and Dr. J. Christy Wilson. Thank you for your unyielding commitment to the things of God and your love for those whom he created in his image.

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us (2 Corinthians 4:7 NRSV).

Table of Contents

Chapter three: Island dreams and Diaspora realities

Migration, transnationalism, and the formation of immigrant Pentecostal Churches

Chapter one: Introduction

I'm here, I see
I make a part of a little planet
here, with some of everybody now

I stretch myself, I see
I'm like a migrant bird
who will not return from here …

Rooms echo my voice, I see
I was not a migrant bird.
I am a transplanted sapling, here, blossoming.[1]

Introduction and purpose of study

The feelings of displacement and adjustment that accompany the migration process echoed in the above poem are significant features of an immigrant's life. This disorientation, normally expressed in terms of experiencing culture shock, highlights the immigrant's endeavour to regain one's equilibrium, i.e. integrating this new context and culture and their experiences within them, into their existing frame of reference.[2] This frame of reference is one that is carved out of the histories and experiences of the homeland and therefore forms the primary interpretative lens through which the migrant will engage with the new context. For many West Indian[3]

[1] Excerpt from the poem 'Black Kid in a New Place' in James Berry, *When I Dance* (London: Penguin Books, [1990] 1988), 42.

[2] The term 'culture shock' was first used by Kalvero Oberg in 1954 during an informal talk to the American wives Club in Rio de Janeiro. While living in Brazil, he was responsible for explaining Brazilian culture and society to the American technicians and their families, many of whom had no prior experience of living overseas. From this interaction he noted a common syndrome which was highlighted in a sequence of behaviours and attitudes: "initial exhilaration and excitement with the foreign assignment quickly turning to depression, disillusionment, harsh criticism of Brazilian ways, and concern with health problems, usually followed by recovery and adaptation to the new conditions of life". Marlin R. McComb and George M. Foster, 'Obituaries: Kalervo Oberg, 1901-1973, *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 76, No. 2 (Jun., 1974), 359. For similar behaviours and attitudes among long-term immigrants see: Adrian Furham and Stephen Bochner, *Culture Shock: Psychological reactions to unfamiliar environments* (London: Methuen & Co: 1986), 76-95, 161-199; Muneo Jay Yoshikawa, 'Cross-Cultural and Perceptual Development' in Young Yun Kim and William B. Gudykunst, eds., *Cross-Cultural Adaptation* (London: Sage Publications, 1988), 140-148.

[3] Although this segment of the population is currently designated as African-Caribbean or Afro-Caribbean within the British context, there exists a long history of the usage of the term West Indian, both within the wider society and among the migrants themselves. Within the American context by contrast, it is the West Indian term that is more prominent. Thus, given the comparative framework within which this thesis is located it was necessary to use a common term that was applicable to the migrants in contexts. In addition, this term had to be one that was used not only within the wider host context, but among the migrants as well. The term that best meets these criteria is West Indian. Having chosen to use this term, it is necessary to acknowledge that there are also various ideological connotations, i.e. imperialism, racial hierarchy and Black inferiority, which are associated with this term especially within the British context. See: Ruth Glass, *Newcomers: West Indians in London* (London: Centre for Urban Studies and George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1960); Sheila Patterson, *Dark Strangers* (London: Travistock Publications, 1963); Kenneth Little*, Negroes in Britain: a study of*

migrants, this process becomes more complex as they also encounter an urban context for which their predominantly rural frame of reference may prove inadequate. According to David A. Roozen, William McKinney and Jackson W. Carroll,[4] this inadequacy is primarily due to the complexity, dynamism and fluidity of the urban context. They characterize the urban context as having: a large metropolitan area which incorporates both the central city and the suburbs; dramatic diversity in residential patterns and socio-economic status between the central city and the suburbs; a central city marked by dire socio-economic problems; an interdependence between the suburbs and central cities; enclave politics; and the pre-eminence of privatization within the individual's life. When religious plurality is added to these characteristics the urban context becomes even more complex.

As a result, the more communal nature of the rural context, along with its individualistic theology and competitive parish structure is no longer adequate within the new context. Thus this encounter and the adjustment process that it necessitates between the immigrant and the host society, creates a unique space that facilitates the continuous transformation of the immigrant, the new context and their old frame of reference. It is the interactions and transformations within this creative space that will be the focus of this thesis. For it is within this space that many immigrants, and specifically West Indian immigrants, live, work, rear their children, practice their religious beliefs, navigate various transnational ties and become inserted into the fabric of the Diaspora.

In this thesis, the examination of this space will be conducted within the context of the immigrant Pentecostal churches in which various West Indian immigrants participate in both New York City and London. For many immigrants, including West Indians, the religious communities in which they participate are a prominent feature of their lives – one which enables them to creatively navigate and

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racial relations in English society, rev. ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul ([1948] 1972). Within the American context, the term is appropriated in a manner that places the migrant within the larger Black population, but in a position where they are perceived to be 'better' than some members of the larger African American community. See Ira Reid, *The Negro Immigrant* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1939); Mary Waters, *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Reuel R. Rogers, *Afro-Caribbean Immigrants and the Politics of Incorporation: Ethnicity, Exception, or Exit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[4] David A. Roozen, William McKinney and Jackson W. Carroll, *Varieties of Religious Presence: Mission in Public Life* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1984), 4 -15.

interact with the host context and live out their faith.[5] This is accomplished by providing a space where "members of an ethnic group can come together around cultural symbols and practices that resonate with them".[6] However, in the process of providing such a space for immigrants, many of these religious communities are commonly perceived by the various members of the host society to be functioning as a 'virtual immigrant enclave'[7] or as a 'colony' – an agency that impedes the migrants social integration which in turn produces further isolation and exclusion within the host society.[8] The end result of this isolation is that the immigrant continues to be perceived by the majority population as the 'other' or an outsider, who ultimately is unable to assimilate into the host society and by so doing prevents the society from functioning 'properly'.[9]

Such an assertion however, is problematic because it ignores the ways in which these religious communities function as a source of cultural and social capital formation, an alternative family, and "a powerful forum for the [re-negotiation and]

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[5]See: Michael W. Foley, and Dean R. Hoge, *Religion and the New Immigrants: How Faith Communities Form Our Newest Citizens* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Jacob K. Olupona and Regina Gemignani, eds., *African Immigrant Religions in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2007); Gerrie ter Haar, ed., *Strangers and Sojourners: Religious Communities in the diaspora* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998); Afe Adogame, and Cordula Weissköppel, eds., *Religion in the Context of African Migration* (Bayreuth: Pia Thielmann & Eckhard Breitinger, 2005); For both West Indians in the United States and Britain, this context is a racial one which is governed by the proliferation of several discriminatory stereotypes about minorities, especially those of African descent.

[6] Foley, *Religion and the New Immigrants,* 10.

[7] Ibid.

[8] John A. Arthur, *The African Diaspora in the United States and Europe: The Ghanaian Experience* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 101-102.

[9] The perceived failure that is noted within the wider society is based on the assumption that assimilation is the norm. It is necessary to note however that in both the American and British contexts, the values to which the migrant are expected to assimilate are based upon those of the middle-class Anglo-Protestant culture. Consequently, the retention of one's ethnic, religious and cultural distinctions may be perceived as a threat to the society and its structures. According to political scientist Samuel Huntington, the retention of Spanish as the primary language among numerous Mexican immigrants in America, poses a real threat to the dominance of English as the national language. See Samuel Huntington, *Who are we?: America's great debate* (London: Free Press, 2004). These and many other 'concerns' have taken on added dimensions in light of the events which occurred on September 11, 2001, and the role that second generation Muslims played in the London suicide bombings in July 2005. The prominence and impact of such 'concerns' have resulted in the emergence of a discourse within academia and the wider society on Islamophobia and other migration issues. See: Barry van Driel, ed., *Confronting Islamophobia in Educational Practice* (Stroke on Trent: Trentham Books, 2004); Minette Marrin, "Should we limit immigrants to Europeans?" in *The Sunday Times* June 17, 2007. Website: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/minette_marrin/article1942934.ece. Accessed October 9, 2008; Ruben Navarrette Jr., "Commentary: Immigrants melting into the pot as usual" May 27, 2008 featured on *CNN Politics.Com*. Website: http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/05/27/navarette.may.27/index.html. Accessed October 9, 2008

construction of identities"[10] for the immigrants. Simultaneously, such an assumption serves to exempt the host society from their responsibility in the development of the social realities that make the presence of such organizations a necessity for immigrants. For as a survey of the residential patterns of West Indian immigrants in New York City and London reveals, a large percentage of them reside in enclaves within larger socio-economically deprived urban areas. In the United States, these enclaves are located within predominantly Black areas. In London however, West Indian enclaves are located within specific communities which include white British and other minority communities.

These enclaves play a significant role in the West Indian immigrant's life, specifically in its formation and preservation. Firstly, these enclaves were formed because these areas were the primary places available for West Indian immigrants to reside. Secondly, within these enclaves, although plagued with poverty, unemployment and crime, the immigrants can intentionally preserve aspects of their ethnic heritage, language and culture. Linked to this preservation role is the empowerment of the immigrant. These roles of preservation and empowerment are accomplished through several social organizations, especially religious ones. Within the religious context, the order of service, hymns, and rituals are all conducted in a manner that resonates with whom the immigrants are as West Indians, thus affirming their ethnic and religious identities. Whereas the immigrant may face discrimination or be ostracized within the wider society, their culture is celebrated and treated as normative within the Pentecostal churches in which they participate. These religious organizations also function as places of empowerment for the immigrants. Therefore, while many immigrants are relegated to a subservient position within society, at church these same immigrants occupy various leadership positions. From a social perspective, these churches also function as sites where members have access to housing, social welfare, and employment opportunities while also creating "interlacing ties which reinforce parental authority and values vis-à-vis the second generation".[11]

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[10] Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity: Pentecostalism and the mediation of Jamaican ethnicity and gender in England* (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 2.

[11] Mary C. Waters, 'Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second-Generation Black Immigrants in New York City' *International Migration Review* 28, no. 4, Special Issue: The New Second Generation (winter, 1994): 804.

Within the context of West Indian Pentecostal churches, this thesis will examine two specific issues: identity[12] and mission. Identity[13] is an essential element in the lives of all human beings. Human beings are social beings, thus we learn things about ourselves and others through interacting with other human beings. At the heart of this interaction however, is identity, which determines how individuals perceive themselves and others. In this regard, the notion of identity can be said to hinge "on the apparently paradoxical combination of sameness and difference".[14] We are the same in that we share a certain level of commonality – as humans and as women, men, etc. However simultaneously, there are aspects of identity that highlight the ways in which an individual is unique and thus different from others. Given these dynamics, it is necessary to acknowledge some of the complexities accompanying identity and the process of identification. First, identity is not static. Instead it is fluid – undergoing dynamic changes as it interacts with various social, economic, political and cultural factors in the surrounding environment. It also bears noting that identity is not singular – i.e. every individual will subconsciously or consciously identify in a multiplicity of ways, and these identities will in turn impact their other identities. Thus Steph Lawler argues:

> It is not as though one could have a gendered identity, for example, and then, in addition to that, a raced identity… Rather, race, gender and the rest interact, so that to be a white woman is not the same – in terms of meaning and experience – as to be a black woman.[15]

It also bears noting that in the process of identifying with one thing, one also excludes something else. Thus when the issue of identity is translated into the immigrant context, inclusion/exclusion, similar/different dynamics attain an even

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[12] It should be noted that identity is now seriously criticized by postmodernists as a normative discourse and many would argue no longer exists in the socially constructed manner in which it is normally defined. Among postmodernists however there is some difference in their articulation of the continued existence of self. For one group, the self is still socially constructed however there is a experiential element to that construction. As a result, post-modernity signals a "world that multiplies and hybridizes our identities". See James A. Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium, *The self we live by: narrative identity in a postmodern world* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 56-57. For the other group, the reality of the self like the concept of the world is itself a myth and thus nothing.

[13] There are two aspects to identity – self-perception and the perception by others. Self-perception focuses on how an individual identifies him or herself. This identification is a product of the individual's interaction with the world around them. This act of self-perception also provides the individual with a dynamic system which in turn gives meaning to the terms by which their concept of self is defined. Perception by others deals with the view that has been imposed upon an individual by others. As a conception of self, both individual and other identities include the physical, emotional, social and psychological attributes of an individual.

[14] Steph Lawler, *Identity: Sociological Perspectives* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 2.

[15] Ibid., 3.

more seminal position. For as the immigrant enters into another nation state and encounters a different socio-economic, political, and even religious context, their identities begin to undergo a process of change. Some of these changes may include the re-negotiation[16] or construction of other ethnic identities. Within the Diaspora context, the immigrant may change identities over time, and in some cases may adhere to different identities at the same time depending on the circumstances they face. Thus, the dominant identities expressed by immigrants may be a product of their interaction with and reaction to: the socio-economic, political and cultural contexts within the host country, the identities ascribed to them by the wider society; other ethnic groups; and even their own ethnic group. Within West Indian immigrant religious communities another dimension is added – that of the Pentecostal religious identities. These religious identities also undergo a process of change within the new host context. These changes are also influenced by various social, religious and cultural factors.

Throughout the history of Christianity, the concept of 'mission' has remained a dominant theme. Beginning with the mandates recorded in Matthew 28: 19-20 and Acts 1:8, mission has been presented as a cross-cultural exercise in which followers of Jesus are engaged. This involved going into various contexts to witness about Jesus Christ and in the process see others become followers of Jesus. However, mission is not only something in which individual believers engage but it is also a fundamental feature of the church as well. According to David Bosch in *Transforming Mission*, "the identity of the church is missional by its very nature".[17] Thus it is the "space in the world, at which the reign of Jesus Christ over the whole world is evidenced and

[16] This process of re-negotiating one's identity is very complex and involves various simultaneous and inter-related actions. These may include the transformation, maintenance, and adaptation of identities. It is necessary to note that none of these actions takes precedence over the others, because all can be engaged in by the immigrant at varying levels depending on the conditions of their social context. Transformation incorporates those aspects of the immigrants' identities that undergo marked changes as they interact with the new context. This would include a status change, for example, within the home as the female moves from being the secondary bread winner to the primary one. Maintenance is used in the reactive sense, in that, once the immigrant is confronted with the various situations within the host country, they react by adhering to their ethnic identity with a marked vehemence, which was not the case in their home countries. Thus a Jamaican immigrant who did not practice certain aspects of Jamaican culture, such as actively listening to Reggae, may in the New York context, deem such a cultural practice to be vitally important and a means of distinguishing themselves from others. Adaptation is characterized in the various measures in which the immigrant engages to integrate into the new context. The most common example of this is seen in relation to rearing the second and later generations. Within this context, the common West Indian manner of discipline by spanking is adapted to host society's equivalent of timeout because of the laws that govern child abuse.

[17] David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998), 392.

proclaimed. … The Church is the place where testimony and serious thought are given to God's reconciliation of the world with himself in Christ".[18] However various questions have existed concerning how this process of reconciliation is achieved. For much of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, this reconciliation was accomplished primarily through evangelism, social concern or a mixture of both.[19] However, as colonialism and Western Christianity underwent critique in various forms throughout the twentieth century, mission has come to also embody a commitment to the transformation of unjust societal structures, striving for the proper stewardship of the earth.[20]

Within immigrant Pentecostal churches, both the conception and practice of mission take on added dimensions as these religious communities strive to be a place where immigrants can re-negotiate/construct their identities, navigate the terrains for the new context while also being a place where God is reconciling the world to himself. In this thesis I will argue that immigrant churches do play a profound role in determining the interaction between the immigrant and the social context in which they live.

The research questions that this thesis will address are: What are the religious and ethnic identities being constructed and re-negotiated among various generations of West Indian migrants? How are these identities expressed in the liturgy, sermons, documentation, auxiliary ministries, organizational structure and life of the members? What are some of the specific factors within the United Kingdom and United States contexts that facilitate this re-negotiation and construction of identities? Does this process assist or inhibit the assimilation and/or integration of the immigrant into the host society, and what are the consequences of this?

This research will also seek to examine the conceptual understanding and practice of mission within these West Indian Pentecostal churches. How is mission

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[18] Ray S. Anderson, ed., *Theological Foundations for Ministry* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 544-545.

[19] This was however conducted within a colonial framework, in which the West determined both the format and the message that accompanied that reconciliation.

[20] As a result of this critique, especially in relation to the non-western context, evangelism (proclamation and discipleship) is perceived within a holistic framework. One in which the 'proclamation is not merely for 'spiritual' solace but for practical impacts in the real world'. See: Ken Gnanakan, 'To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom (i)' in Andrew Walls, and Cathy Ross, eds., *Mission in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008), 6; Stephen B. Bevans, and Roger Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2004), 239-280.

being conceived and practiced within West Indian Pentecostal churches? What effect does the re-negotiation/construction of the religious and ethnic identities among its members have on the interaction between the religious communities' and the wider social context? What is the impact of the coexistence of these identities on the transference of religious beliefs to the second and third generation?

Definitions of terms

West Indian

Throughout this thesis the term West Indian will be used in a collective manner to designate the people who are from the islands of the Caribbean that were formerly colonised by Britain.[21] However, in making such a designation, it is imperative to state that this term also incorporates a complex diversity of cultures and identities. For, each island, while sharing a common colonial heritage, still has its unique histories, identities and cultures. Simultaneously, it is also essential to note that the term West Indian is itself a by-product of the Diaspora and the migratory process in which many people from these islands are involved. Thus, within the Caribbean region it is the national distinctions that are dominant and as a result this collective term is rarely used.[22] However, as the people from former British colonies migrated to various metropoles and began to interact with those contexts, several of their distinctive cultural features and identities were displaced by the emergence of more collective ones. This adaptation is especially the case in several social and political spheres within host societies.

Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism is defined in this thesis as a renewal[23] movement within Christianity which places particular emphasis on a direct personal encounter with God – experiencing the 'Baptism of the Holy Spirit'. Pentecostalism, however, is not a monolithic movement, but includes a range of theological beliefs and organizations.

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[21] These islands are also known as the British West Indies or the Anglophone Caribbean islands.

[22] The exceptions to this are found in those arenas where the islands form a collective group. A primary example is the game of cricket, where you have a West Indian team.

[23] This renewal is seen in terms of helping Christianity reclaim the recognition of the indispensable role of the Holy Spirit as power-for-mission and the importance of the miraculous and numinous within a mission strategy. See Stephen R. Graham, review of *Restoring the faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism and American Culture*, by Edith L. Blumhofer, *Church History* 64, no. 3. (September, 1995): 539. Paul A. Pomerville, *The Third Force in Missions* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1985), xi.

There are two major branches within the movement – the Trinitarian and the Oneness. The Trinitarian or classical Pentecostals uphold both the doctrine of the Trinity and the Trinitarian baptismal formula – in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. However, this branch is sub-divided into two groups – the 'two stage' and the 'three stage' Pentecostals. The Two stage Pentecostals believe that there are two stages in the process of salvation[24] – justification or conversion and sanctification (which occur simultaneously and thus constitute one stage) and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The churches in this group include: Assemblies of God and Elim Pentecostal. Three stage Pentecostals, in contrast recognise three stages – justification, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Churches located within this group are: The Church of God- Cleveland, Church of God in Christ, Church of God of Prophecy and several independent Pentecostal churches. It is within this branch and the three-stage group that we locate the three churches that comprise this research.

Within the Oneness or 'Jesus Only' branch of Pentecostalism, there is also an adherence to the two-stage process of salvation i.e. conversion and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the speaking in tongues. However among the Jesus Only Pentecostals, the classical Trinitarian doctrine is denied and replaced by Unitarianism.[25] Drawing on the narratives about the apostles' mode of baptism documented in the book of Acts, 'Oneness' Pentecostals taught that the correct baptismal formula was in the name of 'Jesus only'. Therefore to conduct baptism in any other formula was to commit a grave error. Churches located within this branch include the United Pentecostal Church, and various Apostolic Churches.

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[24] According to Millard Erickson, 'the doctrine of salvation has particular appeal and relevance, since it pertains to the most crucial needs of the human person' – i.e. engaging with the issue of sin and finding a means of acquiring salvation. See Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002 [1983, 1984, 1985, 1998]), 902. Within Pentecostalism, sin is conceived within an Evangelical framework where it is perceived in terms of having a broken relationship with God. Erickson articulates this as 'the human has failed to fulfill divine expectations, whether by transgressing limitations that God's law has set or by failing to do what is positively commanded there'. Ibid., 918. As a result of this failure, humanity is now guilty of punishment. Coupled with this deviation from the law is the corruption of the very nature of the person – in that there is now an 'inclination toward evil, [and] a propensity for sin'. Ibid. This inclination towards sin is manifested in the personal decisions that an individual makes in the events of their daily life. As a result, what is needed is a change in the individual's legal status before God – from guilty to not guilty. The process of being made righteous in God's eyes or justification is only accomplished through entering into a personal relationship with Christ – whereby the guilt of sins is forgiven and the relationship with God is re-established. Connected to the re-establishment of a relationship with God is 'a need to alter the condition of one's heart' – i.e. to move from having a propensity to sin, to being made holy or sanctified. Ibid. This process of being made holy or sanctification did not mean that the person was incapable of ever committing a sin. Instead, for the sanctified soul, there was a perfection of motives and desires.

[25] Jesus was believed to be the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Literature Review

The issue of immigration has progressively become a highly publicized topic in the international arena. On television and the World Wide Web, viewers are bombarded with images of and stories about immigrants in the United States, the United Kingdom and elsewhere. These highlight the centrality and growing importance of the issue globally. Although many of these presentations have concentrated predominantly on the immigrant's legal status, the issue of immigration is multi-dimensional and very complex - incorporating topics concerning ethnicity, adaptation, family life, religion, as well as several socio-economic and political factors.

Within the United States, a large amount of scholarship has been devoted to what is labelled as "the new wave of immigration". This wave is a result of the implementation of the Hart-Cellar Immigration Reform Act in 1965.[26] As a whole, the discourse focuses on examining the adaptation or assimilation process among first and second generation immigrants.[27] Relevant topics that scholars have addressed include: economic life, racial and ethnic identities, familial life, and education.

Due to the composition of recent immigrants to the United States, many studies have mainly concentrated on these issues within the Latino or Asian immigrant communities. As such, the impact of these issues among West Indian immigrants is rarely addressed.[28] In studies that concentrate on West Indian immigrants, religious communities are normally classified with other social

[26] The Hart-Cellar Immigration Act abolished the national quota system that was implemented in the United States in 1924. The annual allocation for the Eastern Hemisphere was set at 170,000 about 20,000 visas per country, and that for the Western Hemisphere was approximately 120,000 visas.

[27] See Alejandro Portes, Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Alejandro Portes, and Rubén G. Rumbaut, eds., *Ethnicities: Children of Immigrants in America,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); and Nancy Foner, 'The Immigrant Family: Cultural Legacies and Cultural Changes' in *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4, Special Issue: Immigrant Adaptation and Native-Born Responses in the Making of Americans (winter, 1997): 961-974.

[28] However, some of the issues discussed in relation to the Latino and Asian population would also apply to West Indian communities, including: education, jobs, and familial life. A key difference is language since West Indians enter the United States as English speakers. Within the American context, Latinos and Asians are able to maintain their racial distinction up to second and third generations. This however is not the case for West Indians who most likely will be classified as African-American and thus fall subject to the racial, economic, social and political biases that such a label perpetuates.

organizations and given only slight mention within the scope of the discussion concerning their lives.[29]

In recent years, scholars like Helen Rose Ebaugh, Jacob K. Olupona and others have brought the importance of religious communities in the lives of migrants to the forefront of academic scholarship.[30] However, their discussions have focussed on Asian, Latin American and African religious communities.[31] Two notable exceptions are *Gatherings in Diaspora* edited by R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner, and Delroy A. Reid-Salmon's *Home Away from Home*. In *Gatherings in Diaspora* the chapter on Rastafari and Haitian Vodoo is of particular interest, and although these religious traditions are different from that in this thesis, they offer a significant perspective on the religious life of the Caribbean people within and outside the region.[32] In *Home Away from Home* Reid-Salmon examines how Caribbean Diasporan people understand themselves and their lives in terms of their Christian faith. As such it delineates the distinctive theological framework and traces the patterns of Caribbean Diasporan church.[33] Although issues of identity and mission are addressed, they are examined in relation to the wider church and not a particular group of immigrants or faith tradition. Therefore, it will be important to investigate the role that specific religious communities play in the lives of the West Indian

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[29] See: Nancy Foner, ed., *New Immigrants in New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Mary C. Waters, *Black Identities*; Constance R. Sutton, and Elsa M. Chaney, eds., *Caribbean Life in New York City: Sociocultural Dimensions* (New York: Center for Migration Studies of New York, Inc., 1994 [1987]); Nancy Foner, 'West Indian Identity in the Diaspora: Comparative and Historical Perspectives' in *Latin American Perspectives* 25, no. 3, Race and National Identity in the Americas (May, 1998): 173-188; West Indians in New York City and London: A Comparative Analysis' in *International Migration Review* 13, no. 2, Special Issue: International Migration in Latin America (Summer, 1979): 284 – 297; and Mary C. Waters, 'Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second-Generation Black Immigrants in New York City': 795 – 820.

[30] Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, eds., *Religion and the New Immigrants: Continuities and Adaptations in Immigrant Congregations* (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 2000); Jacob K. Olupona and Regina Gemignani, eds., *African Immigrant Religions in America. Cf.* Michael W. Foley, and Dean R. Hoge, *Religion and the New Immigrants*; Tony Carnes and Anna Karpathakis, eds., *New York Glory: Religions in the City* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Theodore Louis Trost, ed., *The African Diaspora and the Study of Religion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Gerrie ter Haar, ed., *Strangers and Sojourners*; *and* Afe Adogame, and Cordula Weissköppel, eds., *Religion in the Context of African Migration.*

[31] Although some of the African religious communities include West Indian members, these are a minority.

[32] R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner, eds., *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the new immigration* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

[33] Delroy A. Reid-Salmon, *Home Away from Home: The Caribbean Diasporan Church in the Black Atlantic Tradition* (London: Equinox, 2008).

immigrants and in what ways membership in these communities aids or inhibits their adaptation or assimilation within the American society.

In Britain, in contrast, there is more research on the religious communities in which West Indian immigrants participate.[34] Among such publications, only a few scholars, to the best of my knowledge, have sought to examine the navigation of identities within the Pentecostal context from the perspective of first generation immigrants.[35] In fact, the majority of the scholarship on West Indians in Britain has focused on the racial, economic, political, and familial issues that the first generation experienced and the plight of the second generation.[36] Another area that is also understudied is the involvement of West Indian religious communities in actively engaging with the society – what Robert Beckford calls 'Dread Pentecostal Theology'.[37]

According to Beckford, 'Dread' is described as "the Black experience of finding one's 'true' identity, consciousness and place in the world".[38] Within the Pentecostal context, dread theology has three expressions, namely holism, transformation, and eschatology. Holism incorporates the liberation of the mind – the internal dimension, with action – the external dimension. In this manner, all aspects of life fall within the realm of the liberative work of God in the world. Transformation concentrates on holistic transformation, i.e. where the kingdom of God forms a space where boundaries and oppression – seen in insecurities and impossibilities – are overcome. Eschatology, reorients the Black person from an overt concentration on

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[34] See: Malcolm J.C. Calley, *God's People: West Indian Pentecostal Sects in England* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); Joe Aldred, *Respect: Understanding Caribbean British Christianity* (Werrington: Epworth, 2005); and Roswith I. H. Gerloff, *A Plea for British Black Theologies: The Black Church Movement in Britain in Its Transatlantic Cultural and Theological Interaction with Special References to the Pentecostal Oneness (Apostolic) and Sabbatarian Movements* (Franhfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992).

[35] One such scholar is Nicole Rodriguez Toulis who examines identity construction among first generation Pentecostal women. See: Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity*

[36] Mary Chamberlain, and Harry Goulbourne, eds., *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World* (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 2001); Nancy Foner, *Jamaican Farewell: Jamaican migrants in London* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979 [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978]); Malcolm Cross, and Hans Entzinger, eds., *Lost Illusions: Caribbean Minorities in Britain and the Netherlands* (London: Routlege, 1988); Sheila Allen, *New Minorities, Old Conflicts: Asian and West Indian Migrants in Britain* (New York: Random House, 1971); Brian Richardson, Diane Abbott, and Bernard Coard, *Tell it like it is: how our schools fail black children* (London: Bookmarks, 2005).

[37] Robert Beckford, *Dread and Pentecostal: A Political Theology for the Black Church in Britain,* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000).

[38] Ibid., 162.

the 'here after' to the now and a commitment to the struggle for justice within the contemporary society. It will be important to investigate how these religious communities respond to the challenge posed by Robert Beckford and what they perceive to be the Mission of the church.

As the second generation of West Indians in Britain have matured, a third generation has emerged. Currently, there is very little scholarship focused on the lives of this third generation. In the same manner that the social and economic adaptation of the growing second generation in the United States has the potential of creating a "new ethnic mosaic [that] reinvigorates the nation or catalyzes a quantum leap in its social problem",[39] so too the third generation West Indian immigrant in Britain could have a defining role within this society. Given the potential for impact upon both US and Britain societies, the dynamics surrounding the second and third generation West Indian migrants, especially within the context of the Pentecostal religious community, is a topic that requires further examination

Methodology

For this thesis, primary research data was obtained by conducting fieldwork in New York City and London. This took the form of a triangulation research design which incorporated an ethnographic and participant observation methodology as well as a case study and comparative research design. The ethnographic and participant observation methodology was employed because it is useful, appropriate and intuitively satisfying for research questions that seek to understand the nature and essence of social processes.[40] The addition of the case study design allowed for the intensive and detailed examination of specific West Indian Pentecostal churches in each of the cities – New York City and London.[41] Both the ethnographic/participant observation and the case study methodology were then integrated into a comparative

[39] Alejandro Portes, and Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies,* xvii.

[40] Jane Ritchie, 'The applications of Qualitative Methods' in Jane Ritchie, and Jane Lewis, eds., *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (London: Sage, 2003), 26-38.

[41] This approach has the advantage of focusing on the particular and then moving to the general. In the context of this thesis this process is essential, given the focus on the re-negotiation and construction of ethnic and religious identities among West Indian immigrants residing in New York City and London. The case study approach also allowed for the expression of the participant's perspective. Within most of the discourse about religious West Indian immigrants, it is this information that has been undocumented or overlooked. This approach also utilizes multiple sources of data. By examining the interplay of these sources, one is better able to elucidate the dynamics that are at play in these religious organizations.

research strategy[42] which enabled another dimension to be added to the research. For, by embodying the logic of comparison, this design "implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations".[43] When the comparative design is used specifically in a cross-cultural context, as is the case when studying immigrants, it "helps to reduce the risk of failing to appreciate that social science findings are often, if not invariably, culturally specific".[44]

In total three churches were studied – Miracle Temple Ministries and Flatlands Church of God in New York City, and Willesden New Testament Church of God in London. These particular churches were selected according to the following criteria. Firstly, the churches had to be located in demographic areas where West Indians could be found within the population. Both New York City - specifically Brooklyn and London are places that meet this criterion since New York City and London have historically been two of the primary cities to which West Indian migrate. Secondly, the churches had to be of the Pentecostal tradition. Thirdly, the churches had to be founded by West Indian migrants and be predominantly West Indian in membership.

In the course of conducting my fieldwork, I lived with various relatives in both New York City and London. However this arrangement resulted in certain conflict of interests within the New York context, because, several of the relatives with whom I was staying were past or current members of Flatlands Church of God.[45] In order not to compromise my research this church was used as a secondary research site[46] and Miracle Temple, with which I had no such association as the primary research site.

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[42] In employing a multi-case study approach there is the risk of not placing adequate attention on the specific context and instead becoming preoccupied with the comparison between the cases. For this research, various steps were implemented to minimize this risk. One was to treat each case study as a separate, autonomous unit especially during data collection and reserving the comparative dimension for the analysis of the data. Another step was to structure some of the interview questions to reflect the development of the immigrant family – first, second and later generations. This structure allowed for the investigation of various issues that arise from the specific social contexts without diminishing the comparative aspect of the research

[43] Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 [2001]), 53.

[44] Ibid., 54.

[45] As a result I was placed in a position of having to differentiate between what was being shared with me as a relative of a member versus as a researcher. Maintaining objectivity within this context as well as discerning the motive of the person speaking became a complex issue. For example, in an interview I would be told one thing, however in the course of a conversation with a relative or a member I would be given another perspective on the same issue.

[46] Thus less interviews and ethnographic/participant observation were conducted at this site in comparison with Miracle Temple.

During fieldwork, primary data were obtained from unstructured interviews, and participant observation. In both contexts, the sampling population was chosen to reflect the intergenerational dynamic of the immigrant family as well as some of the demographics of the religious community being studied.[47] It is necessary to note however, that the sampling population was not structured to represent the gender distribution within the churches because although the majority of the church members were female, the leadership was predominantly male. Therefore, since one of the main areas of study is the issue of identity within leadership as well as among the laity, it was important to have the number of informants for each gender equal where it is possible to do so. In New York, nineteen informants were interviewed.[48] This consisted of five first generation informants – two males and three females. Fourteen immigrant children were interviewed. This included two who were designated as 1.5 generation[49] and twelve who were second generation. Within this category, five were females and nine were males. Among the informants, ten[50] were in leadership positions within the churches.

Within the London context, thirty-three informants were interviewed.[51] This included twenty-three individual interviews and one group interview. Among the informants there were twelve first generation respondents – eight females and four males. The total number of immigrant children was twenty-one of which two were designated 1.5 generation and eleven were second generation.[52] The remaining eight were third generation.[53] Of the informants, nine were in leadership positions. This included one first generation female, three first generation males, three second generation females, and two second generation males.

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[47] In the New York City context very few third generation informants were available because the immigrant population is predominantly first and second generation.

[48] This included fourteen individual interviews and one group interview. The majority of the interviews were conducted at the churches. Only one was conducted over the telephone because the informant had relocated to Florida.

[49] An immigrant was designated as 1.5 if they migrated to the host country before or during their early teenage years. See: Ruben G.Rumbaut, and Kenji Ima, *The adaptation of Southeast Asian refugee youth: A comparative study* (Washington DC: U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement, 1998), 1-2.

[50] This included five females and five males.

[51] The majority of these interviews were conducted at the church. Only one was conducted at the informant's home.

[52] This included three males and eight females.

[53] It is necessary to note that most of these informants were between the ages nine and thirteen and therefore they were asked less conceptual questions. This category comprised five females and four males.

One major factor that affected both the number of informants and the gender distribution within the sample population was access. Although initial contact was made with the leadership of Miracle Temple in July 2006 and preliminary approval was given to conduct research within the church,[54] my arrival in February 2007 to commence fieldwork was met with a lack of accessibility. This included: a senior minister who gave me his approval to conduct fieldwork but who would not consent to being interviewed; and a gate-keeper.[55] This gate-keeper, determined my level of access in that she introduced me to the congregation,[56] gave me the telephone numbers of the leaders, arranged a group interview with the teens and young people,[57] and suggested some people for me to interview. Given the role that she plays within the church, I also included her within the sampling population. The interviews were first conducted with some of the people she 'recommended' and once I became more familiar to the church members I began to interview other people.[58]

With regards to Flatlands, although I received permission from the senior minister to conduct research, I was never formally introduced to the congregation as a researcher. Instead, I was introduced to the members by my relatives. Following these introductions I could approach some members about participating in my research, get their permission and schedule an interview.

In Willesden, I was given relatively open access to the congregation. During my meeting/interview with the senior minister I was given permission to conduct the research and asked how many informants I would need. Following this meeting two key events occurred. First, I was formally introduced to the congregation by the senior minister as a researcher, and they were asked to assist me as much as possible in their research. Second, the acting secretary was asked to compile a list of members who were willing to be interviewed and give it to me. Most of my informants were the people documented on that list. However as I participated within the various

[54] Following a meeting with the senior minister, in which he was presented with a annotated copy of my proposal, I was formally introduced to the congregation as someone who would be returning in 2007 to conduct research within the church.

[55] A gate keeper is an individual who manages both the flow of information about an organization and the access to people within it.

[56] The senior minister was not in church on that Sunday.

[57] Within this group interview another gate-keeper was present – the vice-president of the youth group. This group was pre-selected and included those teens and young people who were observed to be very active within the church. This is balanced by also interviewing some of the young people not included in this group.

[58] This was vital in order to gain a balance of perspectives.

services and became more familiar with the congregation, I was able to interview some people who were not on that list. The senior minister and leaders were also very cooperative in assisting me to deal with gaps in the sample population. For instance, when I realized that I needed to get some third generation responses they arranged for me to conduct a group interview with one of the pre-teen Sunday school classes.[59]

Primary data was also obtained through participant observation of various Sunday services, mid-week services and other auxiliary programmes. The mid-week services primarily consisted of Bible studies, and prayer meetings, while auxiliary services included youth meetings, ladies meetings, Sunday school, church banquets and some fund raising programmes.

During my fieldwork informed consent was obtained on several levels. The first level was administrative. A meeting was scheduled with senior ministers during which the research project was discussed and permission was sought to conduct the research within that particular religious organization. An annotated copy of my research proposal was given to each minister to be placed within the church's file. Following the meetings, I was formally introduced to the members of the congregation as a researcher. For Miracle Temple ministries this introduction happened on two occasions, July 2006 and again in March 2007. For Willesden New Testament Church of God this occurred in June 2007. In the case of Flatlands Church of God, administrative permission was also granted. Although I was not introduced to the congregation as a researcher, when I approached several members about being interviewed this was stated in the conversation about seeking their permission to be interviewed.

The second level of informed consent was obtained from the individuals themselves. Although I had already received administrative permission to conduct my fieldwork, in the process of scheduling the interviews I again asked the participants if they consented to be interviewed. Only after their agreement were the interviews scheduled. Before beginning each interview, I thanked each participant for agreeing to be interviewed and I notified them of the anonymity and confidentiality that would govern the information that they provided. In the case of younger children, their parents and/or youth leaders' verbal consent was obtained. For these

[59] Although two adults were in the room during the interview, they were not there in a gate-keeper capacity since they did not take part in the interview. Their presence did not seem to affect the children's responses to the questions.

informants as well, care was taken to let them know that the data that they provided as well as their identities would be protected.

The researcher in the context of the fieldwork

I am a female Jamaican/American, who was involved in a West Indian immigrant church in the United States for five years and who currently resides in Britain. I am a member of a transnational family that has ties to several nations – Jamaica, Trinidad, Canada, the United States and Britain.[60] This transnational dimension is further augmented by the reality that several of my family members are involved in West Indian Pentecostal churches similar to the ones that have been examined in this thesis.[61] Therefore given mine and my family members' status as West Indian immigrants who are or have been involved in immigrant Pentecostal churches, I approach the research on one level as an insider. However, simultaneously, as a researcher I am interacting with West Indian immigrants and the religious communities in which they participate in diverse contexts and with a specific goal in mind – conducting fieldwork. In this regard I am an outsider. Negotiating this dynamic was particularly insightful in that I found myself to be perceived more as an outsider in the context that I was most familiar with and in the past has been involved in – i.e. the New York City context. In contrast the London context with which I was unfamiliar and not previously involved became the one in which I was perceived to be more of an insider. The variety of reactions in the two contexts raises the need for further interrogation, as to the dynamics that are at play within the organizations and how that relates to the context in which they are located. Some of these dynamics are addressed in the chapters that follow.

[60] These ties include having relatives who reside, work and/or have citizenship in one of these countries.

[61] It is important to reiterate what was stated previously that some of the relations are and have been members of one of the churches that are examined in this thesis.

Outline of Thesis

Chapter one: Introduction

This chapter gives a brief overview of the thesis. Along with the documentation of the thesis statement, there is a presentation of the research questions. Chapter one also includes a discussion of the rationale for conducting this particular research. This rationale will be presented in two parts: First, a literature review of the leading scholars in this area of study; second, a brief description of the contextual and internal factors in relation to West Indian religious communities that make this research warranted. The methodology employed during the course of the research is also discussed.

Chapter two: Formation: Ethnic and religious identities within the West Indian context

This chapter focuses on the construction and expression of ethnic and religious identities within the West Indian context. It will examine the roles that the Spanish and British colonial system, African slaves, Amerindians, and various missionaries played in the formulation of these identities. As a result, this chapter examines how these West Indian identities were and continue to be excavated from the history, geography, power apparatuses, personal realities, fantasies, memories, institutions and religious revelations that existed within and outside of the island paradises. By using the metaphor of a tapestry, this chapter also outlines the parameters of the wider context in which the West Indian ethnic and religious identities were constructed as well as analyses several of the more prominent fibres i.e. the role of Spain, Britain, Africa, European missionaries and American Pentecostals, in that formation.

Chapter three: Island dreams and Diaspora realities: Migration, transnationalism and the formation of immigrant Pentecostal Churches.

This chapter will examine some of the factors that have resulted in the presence of West Indian Pentecostal churches in New York City and London. Beginning with the island paradises in which the migrants lived, this thesis will investigate what were some of the regional and international features that made migration a viable option for migrants. Due to the complexity of the issues relating to migration, it will be argued in this section that a multi-dimensional approach towards

migration is vital. Therefore, this chapter will address the impact that regional and international socio-economic and political issues; Immigration Laws and Acts in the United States and Britain; and 'image' have had on migration within and outwith the West Indies. The second section of this chapter will investigate the contextual 'realities' within host societies that facilitated the formation of immigrant churches. Like all other social groups, these religious communities emerged within specific socio-economic and political contexts and also at certain periods in the immigration histories of the receiving countries. It is within this context that the histories of the individual case studies will be considered and analyzed. This section will also examine the manner in which both the immigrants and the immigrant churches in which they participate are adapting to the host context. In this interrogation, particular attention will attention will be given to highlighting some of the salient transnational features that are found within the immigrants' lives and their religious communities.

Chapter four: Finding space: Identification among first generation immigrants.

This chapter will focus on the manner in which religious and ethnic identities are being re-negotiated by first generation West Indian migrants. It will argue that, for many first generation immigrants, the processes of re-negotiation whereby boundaries are legitimized and identities are articulated occur within a migration framework that connects their localities of origin and their new place of residence. As a result, this process in which they are actively engaged is a transnational one. This chapter investigates two primary areas of study. First, it will examine the types of ethnic and religious identities being re-negotiated by the first generation migrant within this transnational context. Finally, it will document the manner in which these identities and transnational features are being portrayed within the rituals and activities of immigrant faith communities.

Chapter five: Creating space: Identity construction among immigrant children

In this chapter the construction of identities among immigrant children will be examined in the context of the creation of a space – a place of belonging and freedom of expression. Within this thesis, this space will be the Pentecostal immigrant churches in which the immigrant children are involved. In this chapter I will argue that Pentecostal immigrant religious communities function as a crucible in which the

several ethno-religious and societal elements converge, thus facilitating the construction of the immigrant children's ethnic and religious identities.

Within this chapter, these elements will be discussed in three sections. The first section will discuss how immigrant children are interacting with their social contexts. In the second section, it will be argued that the identification process for immigrant children is different from that engaged in by first generation migrants. Therefore, this section will detail the various kinds of ethnic and religious identities that are being constructed by immigrant children as well as document some of the reasons for this difference in identification. The third section will highlight some features of the dialectic process in which immigrant children and other members of the religious communities are engaged as they seek to negotiate the realities of living their faith in the Diaspora.

Chapter six: Led by the Spirit: Mission within West Indian Pentecostal Churches

This chapter will concentrate on the conceptualization and practice of mission within the West Indian Pentecostal churches. To accomplish this however, it will be necessary to give a brief overview of the understanding and practice of mission from a Pentecostal perspective. In discussing this perspective, two specific missional traditions will be highlighted - North American and West Indian positions. Following this investigation this chapter will then highlight several of the ways in which mission is currently being conceptualized and practiced within these Pentecostal immigrant churches in New York City and London. Specific attention will be given to the interaction between these congregations and the host societies in which they are located.

Chapter seven: Conclusion: Living their faith

This chapter will summarize the thesis and document my concluding remarks. The areas related to the course of study and yet to be addressed in current scholarship will be highlighted. These will include those questions that have arisen as a result of research conducted for this thesis as well as those questions that could not be addressed during the thesis. These emerging questions will provide future opportunities for ongoing study and inquiry.

Chapter two: Formation

Ethnic and religious identities within the West Indian context

Introduction

In several conversations about West Indians and their interactions with people of other races I have been asked repeatedly, "Why discuss the issue of slavery"? In many ways this is an equally valid question to ask as I begin this section of my thesis. Why should I give space to what Hugh Thomas concludes while writing a history on the Slave Trade in 1997 "it may be said that that is now such well-ploughed ground that there is no room for any new cultivation"?[1] A statement which rings with resounding clarity as information generated from various conferences, discussions, articles and books marking the bi-centenary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire are added to the volumes that already exist on the topic. I begin with a discussion of slavery because it is a place of origin. It is here that the people now termed West Indian came into existence and where their identities were formed. Identities which were excavated from the history, geography, power apparatuses, personal realities, fantasies, memories, institutions and religious revelations that existed within and outside of the island paradises. It was within these individuals, social groups, and societies that materials claimed from these areas were processed, given meaning and embodied. An embodiment which Manuel Castells describes as being "according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social structure, and in their space/time framework".[2] Having justified the necessity of beginning here – with a discussion on slavery, I still take seriously the statement that Thomas makes above. To this end I have decided to approach the formation of West Indian ethno-religious identities, which highlights some salient aspects of the transatlantic trade, from the perspective of a metaphor – the creation of a tapestry.

In many respects the ethnic and religious identities formulated within the West Indian context can be perceived as a unique and complex tapestry. One, whose value and beauty lie primarily not in the characteristics of the individual threads but in the

[1] Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The history of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440 – 1870* (London: Papermac, 1998 [1997]), 11.
[2] Manuel Castells, *The Information Age: Economy, Society, Culture,* vol. 2 The Power of Identity (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004 [1997]), 7.

intricacies of the whole - i.e., in the overall process of synergy and dissonance as the threads are woven together. We should note that the ethnicities and religious beliefs these threads represent are not singular – instead each is comprised of a multiplicity of other fibres. For with the successive arrival of the Spanish, British, African, Indian, Chinese, German, Portuguese, French, Syrian, and Jews to these exotic islands, coupled with the religious influences exerted by various European missionaries and American Pentecostals, another tread was introduced into the construction of what was to become the ethnic and religious identities that West Indian immigrants would take with them into the Diaspora.[3] Having recognized the presence of the Chinese, Indian, German, Portuguese, French, Syrian, and Jewish threads in the construction of the tapestry, it bears noting that these threads though significant in the creation of the overall product, have played a lesser role when compared to the contributions from the Spanish, British, African, European missionaries and American Pentecostal fibres.[4]

The Tapestry

In the creation of some tapestries consideration about the specific pattern to be used may be very important. This is particularly the case when the pattern is a reproduction – as is the case where both the pattern and technique employed in creating the tapestry is a much guarded familial or ethnic secret passed on from one generation to another. Within such contexts, great care is taken to preserve the complexity, and overall confluence of the individual fibres used in the tapestry. In other contexts where a new pattern is being developed greater flexibility may be the norm. For although the weaver may have a concept of what the finished creation should be, room is also given for experimentation, and allowing the texture, contrast and convergence of the fibres to determine how the tapestry is fashioned. It will be argued in this section that in the

[3] Although the focus of this thesis is on the Anglophone islands it bears noting that other European and American countries had colonies within the Caribbean. These countries included: France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and the US.

[4] Demographically the people of the West Indian islands are predominantly of African descent. Although Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have a high East Indian population, their numerical presence among the migrants within the Diaspora is small. This is because the migrants to the United States and the United Kingdom are predominantly of African descent and Jamaican. Despite this demographic dimension, the examination of West Indian ethnic and religious identities will not be focused exclusively on the Jamaican perspective. Instead it will seek to present a comprehensive analysis of West Indian ethnic and religious identities and as such give space to the voices and expressions from the other islands.

formulation of West Indian identities it was the second mode of creation that dominated. For as Orlando Patterson states in his preface to *The Sociology of Slavery*,

> Jamaica, and the other West Indian islands, are unique in World history in that they present one of the rare cases of a human society being artificially created for the satisfaction of one clearly defined goal: that of making money through the production of sugar. … both the British masters and their slaves, … were total strangers to the land upon which they were destined to build a completely new society.[5]

Thus due to the artificial nature of the creation of West Indian society, a pre-existing pattern incorporating all of the fibres – European, American and African, into a tapestry was not available. Also, although the Europeans, Americans and Africans brought with them fibres carrying specific embedded creative material which within their own social contexts would follow a certain pattern, within this 'new context' these patterns were no longer completely viable in their pre-determined format. As a result, the creation of a new pattern, one incorporating all the characteristics, nuances and complexities of the diverse fibres, was the only recourse. The tapestry that came to symbolize West Indian society and its people is very extensive, diverse and complex, characterized by sections of synergy, and dissonance, the incorporation of old pre-determined patterns as well as the wonder of new ones. In the creation of a tapestry, the finished product is presented as a whole, and as such, to try and re-separate these fibres is an almost impossible task. However, for the sake of this examination, the finished creation will be examined from two perspectives – that of the creation of ethnic and religious identities – giving specific attention to the major fibres that enabled their formation.

The ethnic tapestry

The ethnic identities of West Indian people are a fusion of several external and internal fibres. The external fibres consist of: the region's colonial heritage; and interconnections with Europe, and Africa. The internal fibres are comprised of the indigenous peoples[6] and the islands themselves, - their location, geography, climate and topography. For within the environs of the individual islands, the external strands

[5] Orlando Patterson *The Sociology of Slavery*, (London: Macgibbon & Kee Ltd, 1967), 9.

[6] The indigenous people who inhabited the islands of the West Indies were the Tainos (Arawaks) and the Caribs (Callinagoes). Their contribution to the formulation of West Indian ethnic identities took two prominent forms: cooperating with runaway slaves to found maroon communities; and creating a situation, primarily due the dramatic decrease of their population resulting from their contact with the Europeans, where an alternate source of labour was required.

became interwoven with these internal features to produce a unique tapestry – the West Indian people. As stated previously due to the vast nature and intricacies of the formation of West Indian ethnic identities, this section will focus on both the external and internal features that have played the most important role in the shaping of these identities, namely, those fibres that emerged as a result of the region's colonization experience under Spanish and British rule and their continued interconnections with Europe, and Africa.

In this chapter, the Spanish contribution to the formation of West Indian ethnic identity will be focused on four specific strands without whose presence, the people we now know as West Indians would not exist. The first strand that Spain provided was the articulation of several ideologies which were subsequently used to give biblical and social sanction to African slavery. Second, Spain's presence in the Americas created the circumstances that established a link between Africans and slavery – specifically the dramatic decrease of the Amerindian population. Having resolved the workforce issue, Spain's third contribution to the West Indian ethnic tapestry was the introduction of a crop that necessitated the demand of a large workforce – namely sugar cane. In the fight to maintain ownership of the islands in the Caribbean Sea, Spain recruited many slaves to fight with them by promising them their freedom. In the subsequent loss of several islands to other European countries, especially Britain, these slaves, along with those who had previously run away organized themselves in free slave communities – called maroon towns. These maroon communities became Spain's fourth strand, for by their presence, liberty, and acts of resistance they became a constant threat to the colonial system, and a catalyst for slaves in their fight for freedom.

By incorporating the four fibres contributed by Spain, the British introduced a measure of continuity and complexity into the West Indian ethnic tapestry. This emerged in the interlacing of four prominent fibres, each adding a different form of embedded creative material to the tapestry. These four fibres were: one, the institutionalization of the plantation system; two, the absenteeism of the plantation owners; three the creation of conditions that resulted in an increase in maroon bands and other forms of slave resistance; and four the development of a social classification that was systematically linked with colour. We should note however that these fibres are not independent of each other; instead each facilitates the emergence and expression of the other. However the

individual fibres also received additional support in this process of facilitation from two agents, namely slavery and the transatlantic trade. As such, in discussing the characteristics, nature and expression of these four fibres, space will also be given to highlight the role these two agents played in the overall creation of the West Indian ethnic tapestry.

The African contribution to the West Indian ethnic tapestry were the slaves who upon their arrival to these 'serene' islands disembarked from the holds of the ships carrying some precious fibres representing their heritage, history, language, religion and various ethnic identities. Although confronted with several dissonant forces associated with some fibres whose main purpose was to dissociate them from all of these ties to their past they found a way of amalgamating many of these diverse fibres. This amalgamation took several forms and was expressed in various modes that may seem contradictory. There was the development of hybrid personalities – the trickster and quashee, the inversion and acceptance of the prescribed British social and cultural mores, and new expressions of language, music, and dance. Due to the dynamics of the interrelation between the African threads and the British ones they will be examined together – in that each affected how the other was incorporated and expressed within the ultimate creation of the tapestry.

The Spanish contribution

Although European contact with the islands that were to become the West Indies did not occur until 1493 onwards, the formation of the ethnic identity of the people, who several centuries later would be called West Indians, commenced on the morning of October 12, 1492. As the resounding cry "¡Tierra tierra!" pierced the silence of the morning, the first Spanish fibre in the West Indian ethnic tapestry was revealed. This annunciation which signalled to Christopher Columbus and the other sailors the end of their ten long weeks at sea and the averting of a mutiny, also inaugurated the colonization of the islands and lands later labelled as the 'New World', and the 'Christianization' and 'civilization' of the indigenous peoples who lived there. For hundreds of years this 'discovery' has been commemorated in the Americas and Europe and also termed in the

following manner as: "the very birth of the modern society as we know it";[7] "enlarged the world and began a new age of exploration".[8] However, for the indigenous peoples, this 'discovery' and the subsequent interaction with the Spaniards resulted in the formulation and implementation of an ideology of exploitation and savagery that resulted in the loss of land, deaths, slavery, and the near extinction of entire people groups.

For Spain the morning of October 12, 1492, came to signify a new beginning, one in which she was thrust into a privileged position that made her the envy of every European nation. She had 'discovered' a 'new world' that was later found to be abounding in riches – precious minerals, flora, people, and animals that seem to defy medieval Europe's imagination. As 'discoverer', Spain gained the right and responsibility of colonizing, civilizing and Christianizing the people and the islands they inhabited. Legitimacy for committing these acts came in the form of Pope Alexander's perpetual appropriation to the Spanish monarch of the Amerindians' "dominions, cities, camps, places, and villages, and all rights, jurisdictions, and appurtenances all islands and mainlands found and to be found, discovered and to be discovered toward the West and South".[9]

What were the people that they encountered like? On the island of San Salvador, named such by Columbus after "our Lord and Saviour, [which] was known to the natives as Guanahaní",[10] he found the Taino nation, "a gentle and peaceful people and of great simplicity".[11] In describing the encounter with the Tainos Columbus states the following:

> They go quite naked as their mother bore them; … They bear no arms, nor know thereof; for I showed them swords and they grasped them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance; they have no iron. They ought to be good servants and of good skill, for I see that they repeat very quickly all that is said to them; and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, because it seemed to me that they belonged to no religion.[12]

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[7] Justo L. González, foreword to Luis N. Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism: The Political and Religious Conquest of the Americas.* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), ix
[8] http://www.imahero.com/herohistory/christopher_herohistory.htm, accessed March 2005.
[9] 'The Bull Inter Caetera (Alexander VI.). May 4, 1493,' in Frances Gardiner Davenport, ed., *European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies to 1648* (Washington, D. C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917), 77.
[10] Samuel Eliot Morison, and Maurico Obregón, *The Caribbean as Columbus saw it* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company: 1964), 19.
[11] Samuel Eliot Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean: A life of Christopher Columbus* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company: 1942), 229.
[12] Ibid.

Later in his explorations Columbus also encountered the Caribs or Callinagoes, whom he describes as "a people who are regarded in all the islands as very ferocious and who eat human flesh".[13] Added evidence of their savagery and incivility is given by Peter Martyr who when describing the Caribs states:

> The Cannibals captured children, whom they castrated, just as we do chicken and pigs we wish to fatten for the table, and when they were grown and become fat they ate them. Older persons, who fell into their power, were killed and cut into pieces for food; they also ate the intestines and the extremities, which they salted, just as we do hams.[14]

Even the more 'civilized' peoples like the Incas, Aztecs, and Mayans, also engaged in 'uncivilized' and 'bestial' behaviour – specifically human sacrifice.

The question that Spain had to answer as they embarked on the process of colonization, civilization and Christianization was how would they relate to those whose culture and nature seemed to be so bestial and uncivilized in regards to their own? In seeking a response to this Spain was faced with the daunting task of fitting these 'people' into their 'civilized' context. Was there any philosophy that would provide them with a framework on which to build a 'right' perspective of these 'new people'? The Spaniards found an answer in the Aristotelian ideology of natural slavery, which states "that one part of mankind is set aside by nature to be slaves in the service of masters born for a life of virtue free of manual labor".[15] This ideology underwent a process of synthesis with various Christian thoughts articulated by both Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus so that "the term barbarus which, since the sixth century, had been used rather loosely to describe anyone 'out there' was now brought under closer scrutiny in the light of its use by Aristotle to classify a certain type of man".[16] And thus it came to be applied broadly

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[13] Ibid., 13.

[14] De Orbe Novo, *The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghera,* trans. Francis Augustus MacNutt, vol.1 (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970 [1912]), 63. The descriptions of the Caribs as cannibals need to be interrogated since there are several ideological connotations associated with them. First, these descriptions were composed by those whose agenda was to conquer that particular people group. Labelling the Caribs as cannibals, would help to justify the Europeans conquering them. Second, it bears noting that the Caribs adopted various aggressive postures in regards to the Europeans who were seen as threatening their sovereignty. In contrast, the Tainto, who are described as peaceful, were more prone to accommodating and being submissive to the Europeans and therefore were more easily subjugated by them. See: Patrick Hylton, *The Role of Religion in Caribbean History*, (Kearney: Morris Publishing, 2002), 156-157; and Jayme A. Sokolow, *The Great Encounter: Native Peoples and European Settlers in the Americas, 1492-1800* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 212-213.

[15] Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1959), 13.

[16] Anthony Pagden, *The fall of natural man: The American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 23.

to all non-Christian peoples, irrespective of race or religious beliefs, who behaved in a savage or 'uncivil' manner, i.e. unlike their own. As can be seen from the description of the indigenous peoples stated previously, there is no shortage of barbarous and uncivilized acts that lend themselves as evidence that such a label – barbarian – should be attached to the indigenous peoples of the 'New World'. The fundamental implication of such labelling throughout Europe was that "any creature so described, was somehow an imperfect human being".[17]

Having been allocated the majority of the lands and people of the 'New World' by Pope Alexander VI[18], the Spanish monarchy believed that the bull also "conceded them the right not only to conquer but also to enslave the inhabitants of the Antilles".[19] This ideology especially as it related to the conquering and enslavement of the inhabitants of the Antilles was readily adapted and firmly implemented by both the conquistadores and the colonists. Although 'new laws' were instituted in 1542 as a result of the debates cancelling the apportioning of Indians, the colonists in Peru "exploded in armed rebellion".[20] The crown's reaction to the riot was to yield to the demands of the conquistadores and colonists and abolish the laws. Although the Spanish courts were filled with debates concerning the plight of the Amerindians, the impact of their decision on their reality in the Americas was almost negligible because in the eyes of the conquistadores and colonists, they were barbarians, and as such non-humans and brutes. Armed with such a perspective, the conquistadores and colonists charged ahead civilizing and colonizing without much thought to the impact upon the indigenous populations.

Bartolomé de Las Casas in *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, states concerning the Amerindians in Hispaniola "when the Spanish first journeyed there, the indigenous population of the island [Hispaniola] … stood at some three million; today only two hundred survive".[21] The stark reality of the plummeting demographic statistics that resulted following the encounter is also documented by Sherburne Cook and Woodrow Borach who state that "the Mexican native population was reduced from about

[17] Ibid., 24.
[18] One territory that was not under Spanish jurisdiction was what became known as Brazil, which was allocated to Portugal.
[19] Pagden, *The fall of natural man*, 29.
[20] Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism*, 126.
[21] Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 11.

25.2 million in 1518 to 1.37 million in 1595".[22] In most cases, the indigenous peoples died as a result of exposure to diseases brought by the Spaniards for which they had no immunity.

> [Thus] single epidemics reduced villages by half or more, and the people in many tribes were completely wiped out in a few decades…. The major killers included smallpox, measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, bubonic plague, typhus…and a variety of helminthic infections.[23]

Luis Rivera in *A Violent Evangelism* explains the underlying factor for the lack of immunity as:

> the break down of agricultural production during war and mining exploitation [which] created an arbitrary scarcity [of food which was] accompanied by the physical weakening of the natives. Other factors were the lack of the care of the sick, the conditions not conducive to their recovery, and the overcrowding in homes and work situations that facilitated contagion.[24]

As a result, of the combination of death due to disease, and their treatment by the Spaniards, the indigenous population of the Americas underwent a dramatic decline which some have termed as a "process of genocide, an American Indian holocaust".[25]

In 1493 on his second voyage to the Americas, Columbus brought a crop from the Canary Islands that would change the destiny of the islands and people of the West Indies forever – sugar-cane.[26] This plant, which grows best in the tropics, is very labour intensive requiring a large labour population, and large plots of land for ideal cultivation. According to J.W. Purseglove in *Tropical Crops: Monocotyledons*, "sugar cane propagation is through stem cutting of immature canes 8 – 12 months old. These are called 'setts', 'seed', 'seed – cane' or 'seed pieces'. … It takes 12,500 – 20,000 setts to plant one hectare".[27] As a perennial crop, sugar cane "usually produces crops for about 3

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[22] Cited in Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism*, 173.
[23] Woodrow Borah, 'Introduction' in William M. Denevan, ed., *The Native Population of the Americas in 1492* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 5.
[24] Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism*, 176.
[25] "500 years of Indigenous Resistance," *Oh-Toh-Kin* 1, no. 1, (winter/spring 1992). Website: http://www.dickshovel.com/500.html, accessed March 2004.
[26] Noël Deerr, *History of Sugar* (London: Chapman and Hall Ltd., 1949), 116; Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean 1492 – 1969* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1970), 25. The variety of sugar cane introduced by Columbus was classified as the 'creole' variety and it remained the dominant variety within the Caribbean until the introduction of the Otaheite variety in the mid eighteenth century.
[27] J. W. Purseglove, *Tropical Crops: monocotyledons* (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1974), 607.

– 6 years before replanting".[28] "The first crop is called the 'plant crop' and takes 9 – 24 months to mature".[29] It is also significant to note, especially in relation to labour, that various aspects of the cultivation of this plant including, planting and reaping were done by hand. Thus with the dramatic decline in Amerindian population there arose an urgent need for a new source of labour.[30] For this the Spaniards turned to Africa, specifically West Africa. Although the Portuguese had founded a bustling slave trade upon their arrival in Western Africa, it was the coming of the Spanish that "multiplied it [the slave trade] and catapulted it into a new means of production".[31] The consequence of this extensive need for slave labour due to cultivation of sugar cane resulted in "slavery, from that moment, [being] linked intimately with the Black race in a long history of oppression and resistance."[32] Building upon the ideological foundation laid by Spain in regards to the 'others' the subjugation of the Black race "took on a new ideological and paradoxical justification: the civilizing and evangelizing of the African".[33] Luis Rivera in *A Violent Evangelism* cites Carlos Dieve as stating:

> The attitude of the church toward slavery centered officially on its interest in having Black pagan idolaters received, through previous indoctrination and baptism, into the benefits and consolation of Catholicism. The Crown shared that view and also tried to see to it that Black slaves received religious instruction. Nevertheless, the interest … in having the slaves embrace Christian doctrine was not due only to apostolic zeal … The Christianization of Africans also sought their easy subjection and was … a technique used

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[28] Peter Sharpe, *Sugar Cane: Past and Present*. Website: http: //www.siu.edu/~ebl/leaflets/sugar.htm, accessed March 2005.
[29] J. W. Purseglove, *Tropical Crops*, 607.
[30] Throughout his life Las Casas, the Protector of the Indians, advocated for the rights of the indigenous people. In seeking to alleviate the 'plight' of the Indians he proposed that African or other slaves be imported as an alternate labour source. This was a decision that he later regretted. See: Juan Friede 'Las Casas and Indigenism in the Sixteenth Century' and Juan Comas 'Historical Reality and the Detractors of Father Las Casas' in Juan Friede and Benjamin Keen eds., *Bartolomé De Las Casas in History* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), 165-166; 505-506.
[31] Luis N. Rivera, *A Violent Evangelism*, 181. In our discussion of slavery of Africa, it is essential to also document the role that Muslims played. First, from the 1400's they were involved in the trans-Saharan slave trade. This trade supplied slaves from the Saharan and East Africa to work as domestics, concubines and in the military in several North African and Middle Eastern countries. It should be noted that within this context slavery was not equated to a lifetime of perpetual servitude and several avenues were available for achieving manumission. Second, within the West African context Muslims functioned as intermediary commercial connections between the interior and the kingdoms on the coasts. See discussion in: Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1983]), 23 – 43, 55, 57; Murray Gordon, *Slavery in the Arab World* (New York: New Amsterdam Books, 1987); and John Hunwick, and Eve Troutt Powell, *The African Diaspora in the Mediterranean Lands of Islam* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2002)
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.

> to justify the market in Black slaves…. The body of the slave was chained so as to reward him with a soul that could be saved.[34]

So, from this moment onwards, slavery was viewed as beneficial for the slaves because it gave them the opportunity to give up their idolatrous and pagan practices to become Christians. This conversion however, came at the cost of their lives and personhood.

One consequence of Spain's allocation of the majority of the lands of the Americas was that she became the sole recipient of the wealth that was found there – namely gold and other precious metals. By holding such a position however, she also became the target for other European nations, including Britain, who wanted a share of the wealth that was being generated. Initially, this took the form of various trade ventures and government sponsored privateers. However this was later replaced by the objective of acquiring colonies within the region.[35] In 1655, after suffering a formidable defeat by the Spaniards over Hispaniola, the English turned their eyes to the poorly populated and "poorly defended island"[36] of Jamaica. In defending the island the Spaniards enlisted the help of their slaves, some of whom they freed in the process. Ultimately, the Spaniards were defeated and forced to withdraw from Jamaica and escape to Cuba. As they retreated, the Spaniards "left … their Negro slaves behind, who secreted themselves in the mountains".[37] In the mountains they banded together and formed thriving communities, whose numbers were in the early years of British rule augmented by those of the runaways from the plantations. These freed slaves, later labelled as the maroons,[38] who had been organized into a fighting troop by Christoval Arnaldo de Ysasi became a force to be reckoned with during British rule of Jamaica.[39] We should note this term was not only applied to the freed African slaves and runaways

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[34] Ibid., 182.
[35] For a discussion of these issues see James Walvin, *Making the Black Atlantic: Britain and the African Diaspora* (London: Cassell, 2000), 13-21.
[36] Philip Sherlock, and Hazel Bennett, *The Story of the Jamaican people* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers Limited, 1998), 79.
[37] Ibid., 81.
[38] The word maroon is derived from the Spanish word *cimarrón* which originally referred to domestic cattle that had escaped into the mountains. Over time this term came to be used exclusively for runaway slaves. It should be noted that the root of *cimarrón* is the word *cima* meaning peak, summit or top. Richard Price, ed., *Maroon Societies* (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), 1 n.1.
[39] We should note, although the sustained maroons' presence was limited to Jamaica, their impact on the slave population was felt throughout the West Indians, as will be shown later in this chapter, for their very presence became a means of inciting slaves to seek their freedom.

in Jamaica but to bands of black Caribs in St. Vincent, the partly miscegenated Caribs[40] found in Dominica, and to runaways in general. Thus Michael Craton rightly concludes that "true maroons were found at one time or another in virtually every plantation colony, however small".[41] The problems for most runaways however were the lack of ability to band together in such a manner that would enable them to sustain themselves – militarily, agriculturally, socially and politically.

Thus with the formation of the resistant band of freed and fugitive slaves – the maroons, the final fibre contributed by Spain to the formation of the West Indian ethnic tapestry was added. This strand, combined with the others, namely: the Aristotelian ideology of natural slavery which gave rise to the ideologies used to biblically and socially sanction slavery; the dramatic decrease of the indigenous population, which resulted in Africans being brought to the Indies for labour; and the introduction of a cash crop that had enormous earning potential, paved the way for the next stage in the development of the West Indian ethnic tapestry – the British and African contribution.

The British and African contributions

By incorporating the fibres that Spain contributed to the forming of the West Indian ethnic tapestry, specifically Aristotle's ideology, the link of the African to slavery and the presence of sugar, the British set into motion a complex system that helped to transform the British Isles from a second rate nation to the world power by the eighteenth century. Britain's rise to fame was intrinsically tied to its colonies in the West Indies. These colonies, coupled with the institution of slavery, the plantation system, the transatlantic slave trade and the auxiliary industries that were associated with them produced such dramatic results that changed the face and culture of the Americas, and brought Britain considerable wealth.[42]

How were these three specific Spanish fibres incorporated within the plantation system that the British implemented? All three provided an intricate interplay with the

[40] This group was comprised of Caribs as well as African runaway slaves.
[41] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 61.
[42] Leroy Carter, 'Scotland's Role in 300 years of slavery' *West Edinburgh Times* (January 2008):8; Eric Williams, *Capitalism and* Slavery,(London: Andre Deutsch Limited, 1964), 51 – 84, 98 – 107; and Geoff Palmer, *The Enlightenment Abolished* (Penicuik: Henry Publishing, 2007), 22-38.

plantation system and all the structures to which it was linked – namely slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.[43] On the one hand the fibres justified, facilitated and buttressed the plantation system, while on the other hand the plantation system served to reinforce and further develop the role of those particular fibres within the ethnic tapestry. The ideologies which Spain articulated and implemented in relation to the Amerindians and the African, were further developed to sanction this system. This sanction took the forms of theological justification and the institution of a racial discourse into all levels of society, both in Europe and the Americas that resulted in a European belief in the superiority of Whites and the innate inferiority of all other races especially the Africans.[44] Theological justification was found in the curse of Ham theory – which was based on a particular exegesis of Genesis 9, where Noah curses Canaan and condemns him to a life of servitude. In the racist tradition however, the curse was applied to Ham, Canaan's father, and his posterity. Thus it was argued that since the Black race was the descendant of Ham, it was their biblically ordained role, like that of their ancestor, to be subservient to the other races.[45] Within the social arena, justification came in the form of the racial discourses that were developed during the Enlightenment, and which essentially surmised that the Black race failed "the Enlightenment test of humanity".[46] This racial discourse emerged from a multi-layered analysis, one drawing on various philosophies, movements, authors, and scientific approaches. This resulted in the perpetuation of the belief among many Europeans that the Black race was inferior, and deficient in every

[43] We should note that although other Europeans countries like Portugal and France were also involved in the slave trade, the focus of this chapter will be the trade conducted by the British. Justification for this focus is due to Britain's position as the major slave trader by the eighteenth century and also the intricate relationship forged, maintained and perpetuated between the mother country and her colonies – the West Indian islands. It was this relationship that provided the fragments that would comprise the whole and gave rise to the ethno-religious identities expressed and embodied by the West Indian population.

[44] According to Samuel Yeboah, 'the doctrine of inherent black inferiority' was the justification for not according to blacks an equality of treatment with the white man. For him, this doctrine which informed the ideology of racism served several purposes. Firstly, "it provided moral justification for the acts of bestiality", and prevented any possible indignation that may come from the home context. Secondly, "it soothed any vestige of conscience that the slave traders and colonists might have possessed, by enabling them to reconcile their cultural values with their brutal activities". Thirdly, by undermining the self-esteem of the black man, this doctrine sought to prevent any resistance from the enslaved and the colonized, while simultaneously trying to convince him of the superiority of the white man and his right to rule. See: Samuel Yeboah, *The Ideology of Racism* (London: Hanslib Publishing Limited, 1988), 44-45.

[45] See Colin Kidd's discussion on how the curse of Ham was perceived by many Southerners in the US and some of their contemporary commentators to be "a divine sanction for race slavery". Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600 – 2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 139-141.

[46] Twagilimana Aimable, *The Debris of Ham* (New York: University Press of America, 2003), 41.

aspect of life – mentally, socially, biologically, psychologically etc.[47]. We should note within the colonization framework these racial discourses were used to justify British expansion, since the Blacks were believed to be lazy and deficient, they needed to be subjected to brutal force in order to achieve the successful civilizing results.

In the early seventeenth century when the British began to make inroads in the Spanish monopoly over the West Indian islands, their attention was focused on the smaller islands. However, with her arrival in Barbados in 1625, a new phase in her history was instituted. In Barbados, Britain found its candidate for its first foray into an economic venture that would dramatically alter her existence and that of the West Indies. That venture was the introduction of the sugar plantation. Up until the 1640's the majority of farmers in Barbados were involved in tobacco cultivation. However this venture was not very successful. Coinciding with tobacco's economic difficulties was the arrival of several Dutch farmers from Brazil who were knowledgeable in sugar cultivation and manufacture. The result was that "within the space of a decade, this peasant stronghold was transformed into the advanced bastion of the plantation economy".[48] The immediate effect of the change to a plantation economy was the growing demand for more land and labour.[49] Initially the labour needs were satisfied by white indentured labourers who came primarily from Ireland,[50] while others originated from Britain. However, this solution was temporary due to the following reasons: the temporary nature of the contract; the lack of sufficient labour to replace those who had completed their contract; the servant's expectation of land upon completion of contract; and for the white servants escape from the plantations was much easier than it would be for the slave due to the issue of colour. Thus for the plantation owners, slaves were perceived to be the best alternative: they were cheaper, because once bought, the slaves and their descendant belonged to the owners in perpetuity; and they were immune to

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[47] See discussions about the Black race in: James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society 1955 – 1945* (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1973); David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary* Revised edition (Indianapolis: LibertyClassics, 1985), 208 n. 10; Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance/An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 55 – 61.

[48] Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro* (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1970), 112.

[49] The rising demand for land resulted in the inflation of land prices, so that the many small farmers were forced to leave since they could not compete economically with the plantation owners. Thus sugar plantations became a venture into which mainly the gentry participated.

[50] The majority of these labourers were exiled to the West Indies as a result of various measures instituted by Oliver Cromwell. David Stevenson, 'Cromwell, Scotland and Ireland' in John Morrill, *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (London: Longman, 1990), 166-167.

tropical diseases.[51] The system that the British instituted was that of the sugar plantation. "The plantation dominated economic life in every sense. It occupied the best lands, the laws supported the slave system, and in general all commercial and other economic activity depended on the rhythm of activity of the plantation".[52] In both the West Indian colonies and Britain, the plantation, the slave system and the transatlantic slave trade with which were all intricately linked, and became something to protect and expand, sometimes at any cost, "because of the fabulous prosperity it brought to the English plantation owners directly, and indirectly to those cities, such as Liverpool and Bristol".[53]

The transatlantic slave trade was comprised of several parts. First, European ships would sail to Africa laden with bartering goods, arms and liquor which they would trade for slaves. These slaves were then transported on the same ships via the middle passage to the Caribbean to meet the continuous labour demands required in the production of sugar. Finally within the Caribbean, these ships were transformed into an export receptacle, conveying Caribbean sugar, rum and other by-products to the cities and palates of Europe. Evidence of the wealth generated from this trade and its interconnected elements – slavery and the plantation system, was visible in many of the geographical contexts which governed the trade. For several kings and chiefs in Bonny, Calabar, Dahomey, Lagos and other areas of West Africa, the slave trade was a vital element in commerce of their societies.[54] As a result of the products, especially weaponry, these kings and chiefs received in exchange for the slaves, many of them were able to expand, strengthen and consolidate their rule over their neighbouring ethnic groups.[55] In the West Indies, the transatlantic trade enabled several European farmers to change their economic status from being impoverished members of society to becoming wealthy plantation owners. In Barbados for example, an island which Thomas describes in 1645 as being inhabited by "more than 11,000 impoverished farmers of British stock,

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[51] For discussion on indentured servants and slaves see: Richard Bean, *The British Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, 1650 – 1775*, (Michigan: University Microfilms, 1971), 103 – 104; and Eric Williams *Capitalism and Slavery*, 13 – 19.

[52]Donna Essix, *Brief History of Jamaica*. Website: http://www.jamaicans.com/info/brief.htm, accessed February 2005.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Hugh Thomas *The Slave Trade*, 555.

[55] See Thomas's discussion on the rise and expansion of the Dahomey kingdom Hugh Thomas *The Slave Trade*, 355. We should note however as in the case of the Dahomey's, the engagement in the slave trade became a legacy to be engaged in by each succeeding generation of royalty. Thus King Agaja's involvement in the trade is followed by that of his son King Tegbesu and his grandson King Kpengla.

…owning about 6,000 slaves, and mostly growing third-rate tobacco",[56] through the growth of the transatlantic slave trade and the establishment of plantations and slavery became in 1667 what was perceived to be twenty times richer than it was prior to the introduction of sugar.[57] What occurred in Barbados was to be repeated throughout the other West Indian islands. Within the literature there is much debate concerning the profitability of the transatlantic slave trade, especially in terms of the benefits and impact upon the economy of the British Isles.[58] Despite this debate, there is much evidence supporting the assertion that in some cities like Bristol and Liverpool the success of the trade became an impetus for the shipping and ship building industry. According to a 1678 report by the Commissioners of Customs the plantation trade, with which the transatlantic slave trade was intimately linked, "was one of the great nurseries of the shipping and seamen of England".[59] In the years between 1709 and 1787, the trade became an increasing source of foreign trade for the British Isles and provided employment for those in the ancillary trades. Thus "carpenters, painters and boat-builders; tradesmen and artisans connected with repairs, equipment and lading; commissions, wages, dock duties, insurances – all depended partly on the ships trading to Africa".[60] In other cities, the raw materials supplied from the West Indian islands and the Americas coupled with the demand for manufactured goods both in West Africa and the

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[56] Hugh Thomas *The Slave Trade*, 187.

[57] With the establishment of the sugar plantation came a decrease in available land which resulted in a marked rise in the land cost. Consequently, the smaller farmers were forced out of business. Many of them emigrated to the Carolinas in the United States, where they established farms.

[58] For those who argue that the transatlantic slave trade not very profitable see: William Darity, Jr. 'The Numbers Game and the Profitability of the British Trade in Slaves', *The Journal of Economic History* 45, no. 3. (September, 1985): 693-703; Stanley L. Engerman, 'The Slave Trade and British Capital Formation in the Eighteenth Century: A Comment on the Eric Williams' Thesis *The Business History Review* 46, no. 4. (winter, 1972): 430-443; David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, 'The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain' *The Journal of Economic History* 60, no. 1. (March, 2000): 123-144. For an indication of the manner in which the transatlantic slave trade, slavery and the plantation system contributed to the Scottish and English economies refer to Iain Whyte *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery, 1756-1838,* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 42-49; Selwyn H.H. Carrington, 'Capitalism & Slavery and Caribbean Historiography: An Evaluation' *The Journal of African American History* 88, no. 3. (summer, 2003): 304-312; James Walvin *Making the Black Atlantic,* 116-127.

[59] GL Beer *The Old Colonial System*, vol.1 (New York: Peter Smith, 1933), 17, cited in Eric Williams *Capitalism and* Slavery, p 58. See also Hugh Thomas *The Slave Trade,* 249.

[60] Eric Williams *Capitalism and* Slavery, p. 59. See also Iain Whyte *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery,* 49. With the triangular trade also came the demand for ships specifically designed for the trade of humans – having speed and tonnage. The construction of these ships provided jobs for many carpenters, painters and ship builders. With increased ships came the increase of imports. In a unique way the dietary needs within the West Indies also contributed to the shipping industry. Because the economy concentrated on export crops, the food for consumption had to be imported. A prominent feature of the diet was fish – which was either dried or salted. This patronage of fisheries like the Newfoundland fisheries resulted in further employment for sailors and another markets for European goods.

West Indies to produce an expansion of those industries. Some notable examples are the weaponry industry in Birmingham, the cotton industry in Manchester, and the sugar industry in Glasgow. It is in this manner therefore that one cannot deny the benefits of the trade from a mercantilist's perspective. According to Eric Williams, the transatlantic slave trade "was inseparably connected with the plantation trade which rendered Britain independent of foreigners for her supply of tropical products".[61] The transatlantic slave trade also provided Britain with an exclusive market for her manufactured goods, namely in West Africa and the Caribbean.[62]

Who profited from this wealth? Unlike their counterparts in the American colonies, most of the beneficiaries of the wealth that West Indian islands provided were not the merchants and common English citizens but the gentry. For these members of society, the 'investment' in plantations became the means of restoring their fortunes, and further cementing their place in the upper echelons of English society. According to one Lord Brougham, the object of emigrants to the West Indies "is not to live, but to gain – not to enjoy, but to save – not to subsist in the colonies, but to prepare for shining in the mother country".[63] It was this mindset among the plantation owners that gave rise to the absenteeism, which in turn "drained the island of the very people it needed for leadership in all aspects of life".[64] The impact of this loss of leadership was astounding.

As the pages of history reveal, absenteeism resulted in "the gross lack of proper education, … [and] a complete breakdown of religion and morality"[65] – which was most noticeable in the destruction of the institutions of family and marriage. In the case of Jamaica, this breakdown resulted in the "sexual exploitation of female slaves by white men [which] was the most disgraceful and iniquitous aspect of the Jamaican slave society".[66] The disintegration of the marriage and sexual mores was also evident within

[61] See Eric Williams *Capitalism and Slavery*, 37.
[62] As stated before due to the concentration of the West Indian agriculture on export crops, food items had to be imported. These items came from England or colonies under English rule. The exclusivity was not limited to dietary needs but also clothing. The woollen and cotton clothes manufactured in England became a staple within the West Indian context. In the case of wool clothes – despite the difference in climates, they came to symbolize within West Indian society, especially among the coloured middle class, the 'sign of the well-dressed man'. See Lambros Comitas, and David Lowenthal, eds., *Slaves, Free Men, Citizens: West Indian Perspectives* (New York: Anchor Books, 1973), xiv.
[63] R. B. Sheridan, 'The Wealth of Jamaica in the Eighteenth Century' *The Economic History Review* 18, no. 2 (1965): 304.
[64] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery,* 38.
[65] Ibid., 39, 41.
[66] Ibid., 42.

the slave population. We should note however that this was not specific to the Jamaican context but was evident within slave communities throughout the Americas. This breakdown in some contexts, as Patterson asserts in regards to Jamaica, was due to the effects of absenteeism,[67] however it may have also been a result of some of the dynamics associated with the slave system. The end result was the notable acceptance of illegitimacy and the pervasiveness of cohabitation practices within West Indian society.[68] Absenteeism also created an environment which fostered the "gross mismanagement of the economic affairs of the island".[69] Due to the large number of plantations for whom they had sole supervisory responsibilities, the attorneys were incapable of properly managing all of the plantations under their care. By default, the running of the plantation was left to the overseers who, to obtain higher annual returns, drove the slaves far beyond their physical strength. In *The Sociology of Slavery,* Orlando Patterson cites Henry Coor as making the following statement in his report to the Select Committee:

> I have heard many of the overseers say, 'I have made my employer 20, 30 or 40 more hogheads per year than any of my predecessors ever did; and though I have killed 30 or 40 Negroes per year more, yet the produce had been more than adequate to the loss.[70]

These work-practices resulted in a continuous demand for slave labour, and which when combined with the plantations' potential as an income earner provided two major factors for the necessity of the transatlantic trade.

Where did the slaves originate? The majority of the slaves that found themselves in the West Indies originated from West Africa, specifically the areas of the Gold Coast, Slave Coast, Windward Coast, Angola and the Niger and Cross deltas.[71] For many of them once caught within the transatlantic trade, their status as craftsman, prince, daughter, husband, or their ethnic group, Ashanti, Ewe, Yoruba, or Ibo was of no significance. For within the slavery system, they were the same – slaves – "all sailing away from the place that birthed them and toward a nightmare that had not yet taken

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[67] Ibid., 41, 159.
[68] Within the West Indies illegitimacy and cohabitation continues to be very prevalent within the society. Even with the later introduction of Victorian social mores, this practice is still dominant within the society. As such this is a manner in which the slaves adopted a social practice which later inverted the dominant social more in regards to sexuality.
[69] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 43.
[70] Ibid., 44.
[71] Ibid., 137.

shape."[72] A nightmare centred on keeping them in the throes of bondage and brutality. According to Orlando Patterson in *The Sociology of Slavery*, "if we are to generalize about the extent to which masters abused their powers in the different periods we may say, first, that until about the middle of the second quarter of the eighteenth century brutality to the slaves was the norm".[73] To the planters, overseers and others who benefited from the plantation system both in the West Indies and across the ocean in Europe and Africa, the slaves were a commodity, chattel – something to be bought and sold as will. The main goal was to maintain the slave trade and continue to reap the profits that it produced. Thus Eric Williams is correct when he asserts that "negro slavery was essential to the preservation of the sugar plantations. The considerations were purely economic. The slaves were denominated 'Black ivory'"[74].

Driven by the plantations' need for slave labour, both its control and availability, while maximizing its agricultural earning potential, the slave system instituted within the West Indies and the American mainland to some extent, was structured around keeping the slaves in perpetual bondage. This took the form of the erection of a society whose structures and systems sought to perpetuate the racial discourse discussed earlier. The intention was that eventually the slave would see himself/herself as what he/she was told he was - chattel. In her discussion of the American mainland context, Sidonie Smith describes the psychological effect of this assault on the slave in the following manner:

> To survive … where he was labeled a chattel and thereby stripped of his humanity, condemned to inferiority, and denied uniqueness, the slave had to suppress all needs of legitimate self-assertion, all aspirations of self-fulfillment; in other words, the self had to be sacrificed or 'lost' in order for it to be 'saved' – physically.[75]

Smith's discussion of 'losing' the self in order to 'save' the physical is problematic however, because as the West Indian context reveals, what could be perceived as the 'losing' of self was in reality a deliberate measure by the slaves to survive while subverting the entire plantation system and "hit Massa where it hurt him most: in his

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[72] Charles Johnson, and Patricia Smith, *Africans in America* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998), 63.
[73] Ibid., 82.
[74] Eric Williams, 'Capitalism and Slavery' in Hilary Beckers, and Verene Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers Limited, 1991), 121.
[75] Sidonie Smith, *Where I'm Bound: Patterns of Slavery and Freedom in Black American Autobiography* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), 13.

pocketbook".[76] This was accomplished through the adoption of complex hybrid personalities reflective of their daytime lives spent in Massa's presence and the night time and weekend lives spent in the villages. In Massa's presence it was the Quashee or mask personality which was portrayed. This personality enabled the slaves to mask their feelings and perpetuate the stereotypes that the Massa had of them, while also allowing them to preserve an inner freedom - what according to the Jamaican proverb is 'playing the fool to catch wise'.[77] Through "manifestations of a persona of childlike inefficiency, frivolity, and ignorance",[78] the slaves gave the Whites, and the later chroniclers of slavery, the impression that they had indeed submitted to their place within the society. In fact this was far from the case. According to Michael Craton, "there was no such creature as a genuinely docile slave".[79] Thus adjustment on the part of the slaves in no form signified acceptance. The Quashee personality gave slaves the psychological satisfaction of duping and poking fun at the master and as Patterson points out, "if the slaves strongly resented an overseer or book-keeper and wanted to get rid of him, in the majority of cases they could achieve their objective by simply being the perfect quashee – stupid, bungling, exasperating and completely inefficient".[80]

For many of the slaves in Jamaica, the self-contempt which resulted from 'playing the fool' before Massa, resulted in the deconstruction of the mythical Anancy[81] stories. For, since the Jamaican spider hero exhibited many of the caricature traits associated with the quashee personality, he became:

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[76] Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 49. Massa was the slaves' name for the plantation owners. Within the plantation system he was the apex, holding the central position around which everything revolved. Evidence is normally seen in the layout of the plantation with the conspicuous great house occupying the most prominent place and all other buildings relegated to a lower position. At the bottom were the slave quarters. According to Michael Craton "to at least some slaves [Massa] must have seemed like surrogate kings, the fount of justice, bounty, and patronage". See Michael Craton *Testing the Chains,* 36. Through feigning sickness, breaking tools, working slow, and interfering with plantation machinery slaves were able to impede and greatly affect the operation of the plantation. For the women, another dimension of 'resistance' was added – that of fertility control in order to ensure that their children did not become slaves, thus decreasing Massa's wealth. Stella Dadzie, 'Searching for the Invisible Woman; Slavery and Resistance in Jamaica.' *Race and Class* 32, no. 2 (1990): 21 – 38.

[77] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 174 – 181.

[78] Jack P. Geene, Society and Economy in the British Caribbean during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century, *The American Historical Review* 79, no. 5 (1974): 1505.

[79] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 25.

[80] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 180.

[81] Within the Ghanaian context this word has another spelling – Ananse.

> An object upon which the slaves displaced a great deal of their self-contempt and self-hate. First, by objectifying all the unpleasant features of Quashee, Anancy made it possible for the slave to reprimand and censor the undesirable part of himself [herself] without a sense of self-persecution. Second, having censored this part of himself, the slave could then find it possible to laugh at it and even learn to live with and accept it.[82]

We should note however, that in both the Quashee personality and the Anancy hero, 'resistance' was conducted in a fashion which challenged the existing order through words and masks – very little is done to overthrow the system. For as the Anancy stories reveal "as soon as the prospect of resistance occurs, the trickster takes to his heels, changes disguise, and may even appear on the side of the order he used to flout,"[83] i.e. that of Massa.

The slave's interaction with the plantation system also gave rise to the creation of a dialect and various forms of music, and dance. Officially all of the islands subscribe to English as their primary language; however this 'official' language is regularly displaced by the native Creole widely spoken by the people. Creole, is a dialect that combines various African and European syntax, lexicon and words and in its creation and perpetuation reflects the amalgamation and vibrancy of the culture itself.[84] In the areas of music and dance, the process of amalgamation also occurred – for in the rhythm, lyrics and dance of the region, one can discern many cultural influences, especially the African drum beat and various British influences. From this integration has resulted Reggae, Calypso, Soca, and various other music and dances.

With the prominence of the plantation system, came the growth of various forms of slave resistance. This reaction by the slaves took two distinctive forms: active and passive. The goal of the slaves who engaged in passive resistance was not to overthrow the system but to undermine it.[85] This was accomplished by refusing to work, running away and committing suicide. By feigning illness, injuring themselves, breaking machinery, even outright refusing to work, etc, slaves were able to undermine the system that depended upon their industriousness for productivity. Throughout slavery, the act of

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[82] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 253.
[83] Richard E. Burton, *Afro-Creole*, 65.
[84] This process of hybridization is also evident within the religious practices and beliefs of the people. This process will be discussed in the section that documents the formation of the West Indian religious tapestry.
[85] In her discussion on runaways Elsa Goveia states: "running away was often an effective form of individual resistance to slavery, but it left the slave system and slave society quite intact." Elsa V. Goveia, *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands* (Forge Village: Murray Printing Company, 1969 [1965]), 258.

running away was common.[86] As Michael Craton states in *Testing the Chains*, "Wherever there were slave plantations, there were runaways".[87] However running away was a short term form of resistance, once away from the plantations the slave now had to find a way to survive. To accomplish this several things were needed – undeveloped land preferably in the mountains and other runaways with which to band together to form a village. We should note it is in this formation of villages and communities that the runaways became described as maroons and engaged in active form of resistance.[88] In the case of Jamaica, the mountainous parts of the central and eastern island provided the ideal location. Within the smaller islands, however, the lack of available land became a problem, and therefore other measures were adopted. These included migrating to another island or seeking employment in town as was the case in the British Leeward islands.[89] Suicide was the most extreme form of passive resistance. According to Patterson, this form of resistance "was largely restricted to the African group of slaves".[90] For many, their prior experience of freedom made them unable to accept the bondage of slavery – and thus suicide became "their intractability and stubborn refusal to accept their status as slaves".[91] For some slaves, this refusal was also supported by the belief that they would return to Africa upon their death, and as a result many were encouraged to commit suicide.

Active resistance took three forms, spontaneous rebellion, guerrilla warfare by the maroons, and planned rebellion. The spontaneous rebellions were mainly restricted to a certain area or to a specific plantation. Although the reason for rebellion varied, in most cases it was conducted "simply out of a desire to escape the terrors of slavery".[92] From within their isolated communities the maroons in Jamaica implemented a strategy

[86] We should note in regards to Jamaica this decreased following the treaty between the British and the maroons in 1740, when the maroons became agents used by the British to hunt down slaves and return them to the plantations. Prior to this period, the runaway slaves normally became members of the maroon communities.
[87] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 61.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Elsa V. Goveia, *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands*, 255 – 257.
[90] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 264.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid., 266.

governed by guerrilla warfare tactics against the plantation system and all to which it was linked.[93] One of the strategies of the maroons is as follows:

> By night they seized the favourable opportunity that darkness gave them of stealing into the settlements, where they set fire to cane-fields and out-houses, killed all the cattle they could find, and carried the slaves into captivity. By this dastardly method of conducting war, they did infinite mischief to the white without much exposing their own persons to danger.[94]

From 1725 – 1740, the British conducted an all-out war against the maroons. At the end of that time period, the English armies had to concede defeat. Patterson paints the futility of the war as stated by the Governor in the following manner: "all former attempts against these slaves having being unsuccessful, or to very little purpose. … the rebels openly appear in Arms and are daily increasing".[95] Although "the whites had spent £100,000 in attempting o suppress the rebellion"[96] between 1730 and 1734, it was all in vain. They could not gain the upper hand in regards to the maroons. Eventually, the English were forced to seek peace with the maroons and thus signed a treaty with them in 1739 granting them "ownership of lands … and the freedom to sell their provisions in markets in the neighboring towns as long as licences were obtained".[97] Although the signing of the treaty between the maroons and the British essentially closed the door to freedom that running away presented to the plantation slaves in Jamaica, it also presented them with a visible example of Blacks who had fought the system and succeeded. This example spurred many slaves after 1740 to revolt against the plantation system.[98]

Throughout the history of slavery, revolt remained a prominent feature. In the first years of slavery, these revolts were basically African in there implementation. Against this threat whites responded with various measures geared towards keeping the slaves divided and suspect of each other and most of all under control.[99] In the years that followed, revolt remained a regular part of the slavery terrain with one notable shift, the

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[93] Although maroon communities existed in several other islands, the ones in the Jamaica were the most formidable and thus had the most impact upon the overall plantation system. It is for this reason that the discussion will focus the maroons of Jamaica.
[94] Richard Price, *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1979), 233.
[95] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 270.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Philip Sherlock, Hazel Bennett, *The Story of the Jamaican people*, 140-141.
[98] See Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 99.
[99] Some of the revolts during this period were: the first great slave plot in 1675 in Barbados; The Greencastle revolt in Antigua in 1701; and Jamaica's Tacky revolt in 1760. Ibid., 99 – 158.

leaders were now predominantly Creole instead of African. However following the highly successful Haitian rebellion which inaugurated Haiti's independence and the abolition of transatlantic slave trade in 1807, slave revolts within the West Indies experienced a dramatic increase. Through conversations which they overheard and rumours, the slaves were convinced that the king had already granted them their freedom but the Massa and overseers were withholding that liberty.[100] Thus the slaves, "moved by a passion for freedom and justice, …[and] relying on their own skills, their own courage, their own will, their own capacity for leadership and organization, waged war against the English [to] …secured recognition of their freedom and independence".[101] The rebellions during this period were larger than their predecessors in scope, and were meant to incorporate as many slaves as possible. One unexpected feature of some of the rebellions during this period was the prominent role that Christianity played. This was the case in the largest and most widespread rebellion in West Indian history – the Baptist war in Jamaica from1831 – 1832. The leader of this rebellion, Sam Sharpe was a leader in the Native Baptist churches, who prior to being hanged declared: "All I wished was to enjoy that liberty which I find in the Bible is the birthright of every man."[102]. Lasting less than two weeks, it involved according to Craton, "60,000 slaves in an area of 750 square miles and result[ed] in the death of 540 slaves (and 14 whites)".[103] According to Philip Sherlock and Hazel Bennett, "although only fourteen white lives were lost the damage to property was very great - £1,132,440 12s.6d worth being destroyed and over £161,570 0s. 0d spent on suppressing the revolt".[104] It was this rebellion that cast the final blow that toppled the slavery institution and brought about emancipation of the slaves in 1834.

The fourth and most lasting fibre that Britain contributed to the formulation of the West Indian ethnic tapestry was colonization. Built upon a similar foundation as the plantation system, colonization was able to reinvent itself and continue its' dominance within the West Indian society following emancipation. One of the major hallmarks of

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[100] Ibid., 244 – 245.
[101] Philip Sherlock, Hazel Bennett, *The Story of the Jamaican people*, 142.
[102] Shirley Gordon., *God Almighty Make Me Free: Christianity in Preemancipation Jamaica* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 97.
[103] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 291. There is some discrepancy concerning the number of slaves involved in the rebellion. According to Philip Sherlock, and Hazel Bennett the number of slaves involved were probably 20,000 of which 207 were killed and over 500 executed. What was consistent however were the numbers of white killed – 14. See Philip Sherlock, Hazel Bennett., *The Story of the Jamaican people*, 273.
[104] Ibid.

this structure was the racial discourses which articulated the superiority of whites over and against all other races. Within the colonial framework this belief was manifested in the orientation of the colonies towards Britain. Thus, Britain became the standard against which all were measured, and the repository of civilization, culture, education, history etc. In the West Indian context, these dynamics were mimicked in particular ways – specifically in regards to class and colour. Since 'whites' were the standard, the more white you were the more civilized you were and the higher the class that you held in the society. The result was a multi-stratified society in which the small white elite were at the top, the coloured in the middle and the Blacks at the bottom. For some of the emancipated slaves, the reality was worse than during slavery. For "the landed class, the ruling class, the social elite, the white minority were very much the same people".[105] Thus it did not matter if the slaves continued to work on the plantations or lived in the free communities that they formed, the white minority was still in control. It was they who dictated the social, educational, economic, judicial and religious framework in which all the lower classes lived. They were the "island's repositories of culture",[106] the standard against which all the lower classes were evaluated. In such a system however all was not lost for the person whom genetics determined would have dark skin and thus relegated to the bottom of society. One could improve his/her lot and ascend to the middle class by internalizing the British colonial mindset,[107] and expressing the 'civilized' way of life in one's manner, speech and conduct. Thus the colonial ideology was modified to assert, the more British you appeared, the more civilised you were.

The West Indian religious tapestry

The religious tapestry produced within the West Indies was a diverse and complex synthesis of fibres representing an African religious heritage, and Protestant Christianity as exemplified by the established church,[108] eighteenth-century missionary[109] movements

[105] Patrick Bryan, 'The White Minority in Jamaica at the end of the Nineteenth Century' in Johnson Howard and Watson Karl, eds., *The White Minority in the Caribbean*, (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1998), 120.
[106] Ibid.
[107] One aspect of this internalization was the aversion of the 'civilized' Blacks towards those who they perceived to be 'uncivilized' and backward.
[108] Throughout the West Indian Islands this was the Church of England (Anglicans). It should be noted that although the Church of Scotland was also active in the West Indies, it was never the established church. In fact, as Iain Whyte indicates, the Church of Scotland had two particular origins: by Scottish missionaries who were invited by two Scottish plantation owners to come and minister to their slaves; and in the area of Kingston, "by Scots in Jamaica in response to the overwhelming dominance of the Church of England on

and twentieth-century Pentecostal mission activities. Each of these belief systems, which are within themselves diverse, provided the messages, interpretations and practices that became instrumental in the religious lives of West Indians. In their interaction, the fibres allowed the emergence of specific sometimes contradictory realities – namely the reinforcement of the status quo, the growth of Afro-Caribbean and African religions, and engagement in socio-political activities.

From its introduction to the West Indies, many of the fibres contributed by the established church were focused on preserving the status quo. For much of slavery, the established church was dependent on the white elite and thus served their needs.[110] In the absence of residing bishops who could have provided spiritual leadership, the Church was greatly influenced by the plantocracy. The clergy were appointed by the Governor of the colonies and on the local level, the vestry was comprised of plantation owners and merchants.[111] It was the vestry that was responsible by law to make provision for the maintenance of the church – specifically providing a church building, a salary and accommodation for the minister.[112] Within such a context, any attempt to Christianize the slaves was resisted, and ignored.[113] Although the 1696 slave code stipulated that "all masters and mistresses who owned and employed slaves were to endeavor as much as possible to instruct their slaves in the principles of the Christian religion, to facilitate their conversion and to do their utmost to fit them for baptism",[114] it was never implemented. There were several reasons for this inaction. One was the prohibitively high fee that was required to baptise each slave. According to Patterson by the end of the eighteenth century, the cost for baptizing a slave in the established church was over £3.[115] Another

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the island". As a result of these origins, the Presbyterians' had two dominant foci in their ministry. In Kingston, the congregation only served the need of the whites, while on the Scottish-owned plantations in Trelawny, the church's ministry was to the slaves. In their ministry to the slaves however, the missionaries' duty was to promote the spiritual interests of the slaves, without interfering with their civil condition. See: Iain Whyte, *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery*, 214 – 220.

[109] These missionaries were associated with the Moravian, Methodist and Baptist denominations.

[110] Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', Armando Lampe, ed., *Christianity in the Caribbean: Essays on Church History*, (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2001), 91.

[111] This vestry or governing body exerted influence over both ecclesiastical and civil matters.

[112] Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', 87.

[113] One notable attempt to conduct religious education for the slaves was conducted on the Codrington estates in Barbados by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). This experiment was met with strong opposition from both the planters and the established church. Therefore although it the project survived it was kept within limits deemed manageable by the planters. See Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', 96 – 97.

[114] Dale Bisnauth, *History of Religions in The Caribbean* (Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 1996), 102

[115] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 207.

reason was the notion that "the laws of England by which the colonies were governed forbade the enslavement of a Christian".[116] Thus to Christianize a slave was to grant him his freedom – such action was in direct opposition to the plantation way of life. For the established church itself, inaction resulted from the understanding that religion was essentially "an exercise of the intellect, which they [the Church] regarded Black people to be incapable of exercising".[117] Thus the slaves were left on their own in regards to their religious beliefs and practices – into this gap they drew upon their African religious heritage.

With the advent of the Moravians in 1754, and the Methodist and Baptists that followed, other fibres were added to the religious tapestry.[118] These fibres however had specific expressions. One, their focus was the very people whom the established church had ignored. Two, within their interactions they sought to distinguish themselves from the local ruling class. Third, their presentation of the gospel was one aimed at 'saving' the African soul while not disrupting the social order.[119] As a result of the implementation of the fibres, especially the first two, many slaves, and free coloured and Blacks became Christians. The most successful however were the Baptists. The Baptist denomination began in Jamaica in 1784 by George Liele, an American ex-slave, and who by his presence introduced the slaves to fellow Africans in leadership roles that they had never held before. We should note in the ministry of the missionaries, especially the Baptists, the slaves encountered a Protestant Christianity that resonated on certain levels with their African religious heritage. This enabled them to decode and understand the gospel through the interpretive framework of their African religious heritage.[120] In all three denominations, slaves, and free coloureds and Blacks were admitted into full

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[116] Dale Bisnauth, *History of Religions in The Caribbean*, 102.
[117] Noel Leo Erskine, *Decolonizing Theology: A Caribbean Perspective,* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1981), 69.
[118] For information on the ministry of the Baptist Missionary Society within the West Indies see: Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1992* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992).
[119] The drive to preserve social order became a recurring theme in the ministry of all three denominations. Even after John Wesley the founder of Methodism took an anti-slavery stance this drive to preserve social order was still preserved. See Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', 103 and Goveia, *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands*, 306. One way in which the missionaries sought to preserve the status quo was by teaching the slaves to be obedient, dutiful and diligent in their service to their masters. Biblical justification for this teaching was taken from scriptures like 1Corinthians 7:14, Colossians 4:22 – 24, and Philemon 1 which they interpreted as admonishing the slaves to remain in the 'specified position' in which God had placed them. By behaving in such a manner the slave would eventually be rewarded by God for their diligent service in the next life.
[120] See Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 250; Shirley C. Gordon, *God Almighty Make Me Free*, 98

membership and allowed to play instrumental roles in the ministries. "In short the sustained work of the conversion of the mass of the population was affected by the efforts of free coloured and slave leaders".[121] Mary Turner confirms this impact by stating "free Blacks and coloureds played a vital part in mission work; they were lay preachers, deacons, and advisers to the missionary".[122]

As preachers, deacons and helpers, Black men and women[123] had a certain amount of authority endued upon them. This act, the bestowal or giving of authority to the slaves by the missionaries, had profound effects on the hierarchical structure of the slave society. Thus those who were widely believed to be inferior, became an instrument through which the word of God was declared and a model of a Christian to their fellow Blacks.[124] When this new authority was coupled with the slaves' functions as free peasants, especially within the Jamaican context – the result was life changing. Free peasant refers to the provision – ground system where slaves were allocated a portion of land on which to cultivate their food. On this land they grew potatoes, plantains, yams and other produce. According to Patterson, beginning in "the 1720's [a peasant] system had developed to the stage where the majority of slaves could provide for themselves and many of the more industrious had already began to sell their excess produce at the Sunday markets".[125] As a result of this commerce, some slaves were able to purchase and rear poultry, cattle and small stock. As such, they became the sole producer of vegetable and cash crop for the free people by the middle of the eighteenth century. Thus the "slaves' functions as free peasants promoted the survival and development of precisely those intellectual capacities which the slave system was intended to destroy: curiosity about the world and determination to exert control over life".[126]

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[121] Shirley C. Gordon, *God Almighty Make Me Free*, 7.
[122] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave society, 1787-1834* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 27.
[123] Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', 101. In this regard, women were able to re-inhabit a position they had traditionally held in African religions. See: Sylvia Frey and Betty Wood, *Come Shouting to Zion* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 57, 135, 171.
[124] We should note among the Moravians a strong emphasis was placed on the outward manifestation of the effect of the conversion experience within the life of an individual. See Keith Hunte, 'Protestantism and Slavery in the British Caribbean', 101.
[125] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery*, 217.
[126] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries*, 47.

The full impact of the slaves' new status as a result of the mission churches combined with their function as free peasants to produce a unique development which Mary Turner expresses in the following manner:

> To their established right to leave the plantation and trade at the Sunday market was added the opportunity to attend the mission churches; to their ability to earn money and buy goods was added the opportunity to contribute to their church and achieve status within it. The missionaries, moreover, addressed themselves to the slaves as people with souls to be saved, capable of intellectual and moral judgments, and the activities they encouraged were presented in a philosophical framework that posited the spiritual equality of all men. The slaves' rights as producers and traders encouraged them to develop a sense of their rights as laborers on the estates.[127]

For the slaves especially, the gospel "offered [them] a new, coherent worldview in which all men, whites as well as Blacks, were in the hands of a universally powerful God who called them, equally, to judgment".[128] Although the missionaries preached a salvation which addressed the slaves' spiritual bondage while encouraging them to submit to their physical bondage, the gospel that they heard was re-interpreted to endue them with hope. Like their brothers and sisters in America, their encounter with slavery, racial discourses and other forces sought to keep them in perpetual bondage and was now augmented with the presence of a God "who saw and listened to their sufferings, one who might reach out any minute to release them. This God had their interests at heart when it seemed no one else did".[129] Albert Raboteau confirms this in *A Fire in the Bones,* he states:

> In the conversion experience slaves realized – and realized it in the heart not just the head – that they were of infinite value as children of God, chosen from all eternity to be saved. Within a system bent on reducing them to a status of utter inferiority, the experience on conversion rooted deep within the slave convert's psyche a sense of personal value and individual importance that helped to ground their identity in the unimpeachable authority of almighty God.[130]

It is from this position that the slaves engaged with the society to gain their freedom. According to Michael Craton in *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British Caribbean*, "the phenomenally rapid Christianization of British West Indian slaves after 1783 clearly had a vital effect on the general slave consciousness and an important

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[127]Ibid.
[128] Ibid., 39.
[129] Charles Johnson, and Patricia Smith, *Africans in America*, 139.
[130] Albert J. Raboteau, *A fire in the Bones: Reflections on African – American Religious History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 157.

bearing on slave resistance".[131] We should note in the years leading up to emancipation the majority of the rebellions were led by church leaders.[132] In this manner Gordon is correct in her conclusion that "the Christian teaching of the worth of every human being had found its way into a culture of protest".[133]

Following emancipation both the missionary churches and the established church gained significant importance among the emancipated slaves and the planters.

> They were regarded as an important key to understanding the experiment in freedom. …The churches regarded it as their duty to create one society out of the various antagonistic social classes. The Anglican Church, which was favoured by the establishment, saw their task as a slow process of civilizing black people.[134]

The 'civilizing' of the Blacks was conducted primarily through education. However, underlying this 'civilizing' process of the Anglican Church was their deference to the status quo, in that they upheld the spiritual equality of Black people to white people while maintaining the cultural superiority of the white race. For the ruling white elite, "the right kind of education would produce the right kind of society. Education [thus] became the guarantee that the society would not change, that Black people would remain at the bottom of the social ladder".[135] Upon coming to the realization that the education which they were receiving was meant to produce a Black person reconciled to the plantation system the Blacks refused to be involved in the Anglican's venture. To accept such a position was to return to the position of bondage from which they had just being freed.

Another area in which the churches sought to aid in the creation of a new society was through assisting the Blacks to gain ownership of land and form villages. This was accomplished by the mission churches - primarily the Methodist and the Baptists - buying a large piece of land, sub-dividing it and then selling the smaller plots to their members. This land ownership venture was a success and the Blacks rewarded these denominations with their membership. However as the church leaders [136] in Jamaica came to realize, increasing numbers did not mean singular spiritual allegiance to Christianity. According to Noel Eskine in *Decolonizing Theology*, "had [the church leaders] looked closely at

[131] Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains*, 245.
[132] (Guyana) Demerara in 1823, and 1831 – 1832 in Jamaica.
[133] Shirley C. Gordon, *God Almighty Make Me Free*, 138.
[134] Noel Leo Eskine, *Decolonizing Theology*, 71.
[135] Ibid., 72.
[136] These were the middle class whites found in among the Moravians, Methodist and Baptist churches.

what was happening in the Baptist churches in Jamaica, they would have noted that Black people had not relinquished Black religion, but were in fact allowing the practice of Christianity to coexist with African beliefs".[137] Although the churches made great efforts in meeting the Black's spiritual needs, and physical needs in terms of landownership, they failed to take the needs of the Blacks for religious, cultural and social equality seriously. For many, the submissive, protective of the status quo, Christian identity which the church formulated for them was not a viable option – it was too reminiscent of slavery and it failed to live up to their conception of the role of the church as one who had aided them to gain their freedom from slavery. Frustrated, many turned to the African oriented religious groups. Some of these groups took the Christian message presented by the missionaries and re-interpreted it from an African framework in a manner that addressed both realities.[138]

The result was the emergence of an Afro-Christian perspective which resulted in the development of identities derived from the Black experience and a self understanding among the Black population. With these developments came the resurgence of some African influenced cultural practices like drumming, and dancing within religious worship; the rejection of the Victorian views on marriage and sexual attitudes; and the re-interpretation of Christmas and Sabbath breaking. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, many of the white church leaders came to perceive these practices and Afro-Christianity itself, as further confirmation of the Black people's moral and cultural inferiority. Thus they renewed their efforts to fulfil the church's duty to "efface these

[137] Noel Leo Eskine, *Decolonizing Theology*, 75. These African beliefs were expressed in various African-oriented religions. Some religious groups were a syncretization of African religions and Protestantism. These include Kumina, and Revivalism in Jamaica; Winti in Surinam; Shango in Trinidad and Grenada and Kele in St. Lucia. However others were the recreation of an African religious worldview - for example Obeah, or an indigenous response to the issues within the society, as noted in Rastafari. For many of early scholars who wrote about Jamaica, Obeah was used as a generic term for all of the slaves' supernatural practices and beliefs. According to Orlando Patterson, it is a word that is derived from West African witchcraft. See Patterson *Sociology of Slavery* p. 186. Thus it was a type of sorcery in which charms, poisons and shadow catching were used to harm others upon the request of the paying client. Rastafari, began in November 1930, with the coronation of Prince Tafari Makonnen as the Haile Selassie I. For some followers of Marcus Garvey in Jamaica, the biblical association of the appellations given to the new Emperor and the manner in which he embodied the pan-African consciousness advocated in Garveyism, indicated that the new Emperor was the messiah – who had returned to redeem his people and in particular the African race. For information of its development, rituals and organization see: Barry Chevannes, 'Introducing the Native Religions of Jamaica' in Barry Chevannes, *Rastafari and Other African-Caribbean Worldviews* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998 [1995]), 9-18. For a discussion on Revivalism – the Afro-Christian religion which helped to facilitated the integration of Pentecostalism within the Jamaican society see chapter 6 of this thesis.

[138] Noel Leo Eskine, *Decolonizing Theology*, 78.

flaws from the Black family character".[139] The end result was a divided society. The Blacks and coloureds, who had received substantial missionary instruction, remained in the mission and Anglican churches and embodied the ideals of Europe. As a result, they perceived the concept 'Blackness' and by association the rest of the Black population with contempt. In contrast, for the other members of the Black population including the adherents of Afro-Christianity, this concept became one of acceptance and celebration.[140]

It was this divided society that the Pentecostal missionaries confronted upon their arrival in the first decade of the 1900's.[141] What fibres did they contribute to the religious tapestry? The Pentecostal contribution was its' ability to provide an intermediate space for worship between Anglican and mission churches and the Afro-Caribbean groups. It was in this manner that it presented the indigenous Black population with another viable option of Christianity.[142] Pentecostalism, on one hand was able to "accommodate many of their customs – drumming, dancing, singing, possession (getting in the spirit), and glossolalia (speaking in tongues)",[143] while stressing the outward manifestation of holiness as evidence that one had experienced Christian conversion – the 'saint' identity. The holiness presented was one of "careful self-examination, godly discipline, and methodical devotion and avoidance of worldly pleasures, [so that the believer] could live a life of victory over sin".[144] By incorporating both aspects, Pentecostalism gave the Black population another articulation of Black religious identities – one that linked Blackness with acceptance, empowerment as a vessel used by God; separation from an evil world; and spiritual victory in the life to come.

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[139] Ibid., 79.

[140] It is necessary to note this division was in some cases arbitrary since some people were members of both the established/mission churches and the Afro-Christian religious groups.

[141] Pentecostalism arrived in the Bahamas in 1909, in Jamaica in 1914. From these two islands it spread to the rest of the islands.

[142] For a more extensive discussion on the integration of Pentecostalism within the West Indian/Jamaican religious landscape refer to chapter six of this thesis.

[143] Patrick Hylton, *The role of religion in Caribbean History*, 118.

[144] Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements of the Twentieth Century*, second ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 7. We should note this definition of holiness comes from the Holiness Movement, from which Pentecostalism developed.

Conclusion

The West Indian ethnic and religious identities formulated as a result of the years of slavery, colonization and Christianization were ones of cultural and religious dynamism, marked by survival and adaptation in the midst of adversity, as well as strength and empowerment. For these islands, and their people the complexities arising from the interaction of their various cultural and religious heritages are ones to be celebrated and embraced. For these are the strands that have produced the ethnic and religious tapestries, that play such a pivotal role in their lives and the identities which they personify. As a result of the interaction between the Africans, Spanish and British in particular, West Indians have come to identity themselves ethnically as a people who have a knack for surviving and overcoming. Through the Quashee and rebel identities, the slaves were able to survive and overcome the brutalities of slavery. However, by embodying an orientation towards Europe, the white elite were able to re-affirm their identities as members of what was perceived to be the superior race and thereby further secure their place of prominence and privilege within the West Indian society.

In the religious arena the interaction between African religions and Christianity has resulted in the emergence of a complexity of religious belief systems and identities. On the one hand, there are those belief systems that would be perceived to adhere to Christian orthodoxy and which advocate religious identities that simultaneously sought to maintain the status quo as well as to change the society. And on the other hand were the African-derived religions, which by their very presence, served to undermine the societal structures within which their adherents were marginalized and treated with contempt. Between these two extremes were those who negotiated the boundaries of both belief systems and for whom religious belief became a complex syncretism which allowed them to identify with and benefit from both belief systems. It is in this manner that the West Indian people continue to be – both in their ethnicity and religious beliefs – symbolically a tapestry, characterized by sections of synergy and dissonance, the incorporation of old pre-determined patterns as well as the wonder of new ones.

Chapter three: Island dreams and Disapora realities

Migration, transnationalism, and the formation of immigrant Pentecostal Churches.

How calm and peaceful everything seems to be this morning. Everything seems to tell us it is the Lord's Day; … I watched the children in their nice clean clothes going to Sunday school and all smiling and happy. And I saw old Unc' Tom in his nice black frock-coat, and his clean white cravat, and his Bible under his arm, looking calm and pious.[1]

A brief description of Bahamians attending church.

Growing up I knew that I had separate clothes: you have your church clothes; you had your house clothes; you had your school clothes; and you wore the very best to come to church and I feel that, that is a pressure on people coming through the doors. If we were flexible in our appearance i.e. if a person wants to come in their jeans, and a t-shirt and trainers on a Sunday they can worship just as well as somebody who has got on a hat, that long frock and high heel shoes or even better sometimes.

Second generation female in London[2]

Introduction

In the two excerpts documented above, we locate similar descriptions of an aspect of West Indian religious life that according to Margaret Bailey represents "an important part of Jamaican life"[3] – the practice of going to church. In both descriptions we are told that engagement in this practice is linked to the wearing of one's 'best' articles of clothing. This aesthetical requirement seems to mark this activity as significant, wholly set apart from those engaged in during the rest of the week for which ones' work, school or house clothes are worn.[4] The act of going to church may also demonstrate in a public manner that an individual is a Christian, and as such communicate on certain levels some

[1] Roscow Shedden, *Ups and Downs in a West Indian Diocese*, (London: A.R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1927), 116-117. This brief portrayal of West Indian religious life is given in the context of describing the successful ministry of the Rev. F. Barrow Matthews among the 'coloured people' of Bahamas.

[2] Second generation female in London dated July 9, 2007.

[3] Margaret Bailey, 'The typical Jamaican family', October 1, 2002, website: http://www.jamaicans.com/culture/intro/typical_family.shtml, accessed July 11, 2008

[4] See Iain D Campbell, *On the first day of the week: God, the Christian and the Sabbath* (Leominster: Day One publications, 2005), 194. Incorporated into this aesthetic requirement is an ethos of sanctification, i.e. moral purity. This is reinforced in various behaviour commitments geared towards the avoidance any provocative types of clothing. See: Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity*, p. 138.

of the beliefs to which this individual would adhere.[5] In comparing the two excerpts however, we also note two significant differences: that of location – the pictureque West Indian islands versus a metropolitan city; and the manner in which this activity may be undergoing changes in the Diaspora context. This acknowledgment of difference however, calls us to interrogate not only what is occurring during this particular practice but also what is being communicated through its perpetuation.

Thus this West Indian practice of going to church serves several purposes within this chapter. One, it links this chapter to the ones preceding and following it. It is the previous chapter that highlights the formation of West Indian religious identities, within which this practice plays a pivotal role.[6] The chapters that follow provide a glimpse into some of the ideas and meaning that are being constructed and communicated through this practice. Two, the performance of this West Indian ritual within the Diaspora, calls us to further scrutinize several interrelated issues, specifically that of migration, transnationalism, and the formation of the religious communtites within which this practice is being perpetuated. What were some of the reasons for migration becoming an attractive option for West Indians? What are some of the transnational ties that migrants are forming between their countries of origin and residence? What were some of the prominent factors within the new context which resulted in formation of these religious communities? The examination of the issues arising from these questions is essential because within much of the academic discourses on migration and the Diaspora, the migrants have been presented as passive participants who were 'forced' to migrate or to congregate within 'safe' spaces.[7] This uni-dimensional approach however, does not give

[5] Ibid., 194. See also V.S. Naipaul, 'A Christmas Story' in V.S. Naipaul, *The Nightwatchman's Occurrence Book* (London: Picador, 2002), 367.

[6] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries,* 84, 198-199. See also chapter 2, 45-52.

[7] This uni-dimensionality is seen in the prominence of the push-pull model in explaining West Indian migration to both the US and Britain. In regards to the formation of the religious communities, this passivity is expressed in the belief that racism was the primary reason for the growth of such churches in Britain. While in the US, these communities are formed because the immigrants do not want to be identified with the African Americans. Although these reasons are valid and do play a role in both migration and the formation of these religious communities – they are not the only factors. See: Daniel Lawrence, *Black Migrants: white native a study of race relations in Nottingham* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974) Refer to table 1 Reasons for leaving the West Indies, 18; Ceri Peach, *West Indian Migration to Britain* (London: Institute of Race Relations, 1968), 37 – 41; and Kyle D. Crowder, 'Residential Segregation of West Indians in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Area: The Roles of Race and Ethnicity' *International Migration Review* 33, no. 1 (spring 1999): 79, 86. Both Arnold and Aldred refute this passivity in their discussion of West Indian religious communities. See: Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope* (Nottingham, London: Grove Books Limited, 1992); and Joe Aldred, *Respect: Understanding Caribbean British Christianity* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2005).

adequate space to the significant roles that history, global developments, social contexts and the migrants themselves play in both migration, transnationalism, and the formation of religious communities. It is these issues that this chapter will examine.

This chapter is divided in two sections. The first – island dreams – will examine some of the factors that have influenced West Indian migration in general, as well as their distinctive patterns of migrating to New York City and London. The second section – Diaspora realitites – will investigate some of the complexities that the migrants encountered upon their arrival and during their settlement within these two metropolitan cities. In conducting this analysis, particular attention will be given to the ways in which the contexts faciliated the emergence and the continuation of the immigrant faith communities, as well as the creation of various transnational ties between the Dispora and home contexts.

Island Dreams

To an overwhelming degree, the majority of studies conducted on Caribbean and West Indian migration have used an economic approach to explain why migration takes place. These studies which are normally conducted within the functionalist and historical-structural framework perceive Caribbean international migration to be a classic example of the equilibrium theory, in which "human migration [is] conceptualized as an economic resource responding to the gradient of labour supply and demand within a macro-economic framework".[8] Thus according to the functionalist interpretation,[9] migration is a uni-dimensional process, one dominated by the push-pull model. This model which focuses on the socio-economic conditions in both the sending and the receiving countries, pays considerable attention to the underdevelopment, overpopulation and the social ills that plague the sending countries. This dismal picture is in turn contrasted with the abundance of opportunities to 'better oneself'that are located within the receiving nation.[10] Thomas-Hope in *Explanation in Caribbean Migration*, argues that

[8] Elizabeth M. Thomas-Hope, *Explanation in Caribbean Migration* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1992), 15.
[9] It is necessary to note that this interpretation forms the basis of the majority of the empirical studies conducted on Caribbean international migration.
[10] Ceri Peach, *West Indian Migration to Britain* (London: Institute of Race Relations, 1968), 23 – 36; and Bonham C. Richardson, *Caribbean Migrants: Environment and Human Survival on St. Kitts and Nevis* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 151, 158 – 160, 173.

within this interpretation, the individual's decision to migrate is perceived from the prespective of the "cost and benefits of moving from points of negative to positive attraction under forces articulated as 'pushes and pulls'".[11] Thus according to this model, the primary reason why a person migrates is due to the opportunities to improve him/herself both economically and educationally.[12] Within the historical-structural intrepretation, a centre-periphery model is applied to the global division of labour. Thus, the movement of the migrant is seen as part of an exchange and a transfer of value, in which labour, the migrant's only commodity, allows the global system to the equalized. This approach, like the functionalist approach treats migration as a uni-dimensional process. This uni-dimensional focus however is problematic. First, the functionalist approach which over-emphasizes the push-pull model does not give adequate consideration to the roles that various local and global developments play in cultivating and perpetuating these 'negative' and 'positive' factors in both the sending and receiving countries. This interpretation also does not give sufficient attention to the role that 'image' plays in both the individual and familial decision to migrate.[13] Second, the historical-structural intrepretation does not provide a viable explanation for the periods when migration exceeds the demands for labour,[14] or continue despite the lack of labour opportunities. This interpretation also does not address the other dynamics that play a part in the transfer or exchange of value that revolves around labour, for within the migratory process, there are some migrants who see the process as a means of not only selling labour but also acquiring capital.[15]

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[11] Thomas-Hope, *Explanation in Caribbean Migration,* 16.

[12] Daniel Lawrence, *Black Migrants* refer to table 1 'Reasons for leaving the West Indies', 18. Ceri Peach, *West Indian Migration to Britain*, 37 – 41.

[13] It should be noted that the immigrant is not a passive agent in this process– only reacting to outside forces, instead as the immigrant interacts with these external forces from the perspective of their individual or familial histories and contexts, they produce an image which inturn faciliates migration. This image, formulated from both a real and imagined world, is passed down from generation to generation. As a result, the real and perceived benefits and legacy of migration among West Indians is perpetuated and enforced.

[14] See Alejandro Portes and József Böröcz 'Contemporary Immigration: Theoretical Perspectives on Its Determinants and Modes of Incorporation' *International Migration Review* 23, no. 3, Special Silver Anniversary Issue: International Migration an Assessment for the 90's, (autumn, 1989): 612.

[15] This is most visible in the practice of sending remittances to those 'back home'. For many seasonal workers the money earned form these labour contracts provide the resources needed to build homes, start businesses or assist family members – especially pay for their children to attend school. See Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, 'Globalization and the development of a Caribbean migration culture' in Mary Chamberlain, ed., *Caribbean Migration: Globalised Identities* (London: Routledge, 1998), 193, 196; and Eugenia Georges, *The Making of a Transnational Community: Migration, Development and Cultural Change in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 150 - 163

In this section I will argue that although the economic approach does have a profound influence upon West Indian migration, its present focus – especially the push-pull model - is myopic in scope. For in reality, West Indian migration is not a one sided process- i.e. economic - but involves an intricate confluence of several factors including those having an economic focus.[16] These include: the local and global factors that have created and continue to perpetuate this 'safety-valve' or economic migrant feature within West Indian islands; the manner in which immigration Laws and Acts within the United States and Britain continue to shape and influence migration from the West Indian islands; and the role that 'image' plays within the individual's and family's decision to migrate.

Local and international factors influencing West Indian migration

According to Anthony Payne and Paul Sutton, the Caribbean, and in particular the islands of the West Indies, are unique in that they are located within a matrix of relationships involving:

> two of the great North-South systems of the twentieth century – the American hemispheric system with the US as metropolis and Latin America and the Caribbean as periphery, and the European imperial system with Britain, France and the Netherlands, and now the European Union (EU), as the metropolis and Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific as the periphery.[17]

As a result, the islands are linked to the United States in terms of geography, language, and in many respects, culturally. Simultaneously, these islands also maintain an intricate historical and sentimental link to Europe.[18] Therefore in examining the historical, socio-economic and political factors that contribute to West Indian migration, attention will be given to the manner in which these two links influence the regional context. Although other nations or nation blocs, such as the USSR, China, and even India, have had some impact upon these islands, their influence has been marginal compared to the US and Europe, specifically, Britain.

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[16] Bonham C. Richardson, *Caribbean Migrants,* 177.
[17] Anthony Payne and Paul Sutton, *Charting Caribbean Development*, *Warwick University Caribbean Studies* (London: Macmillan, 2001), 1. The influence exerted by such linkages should not be underestimated in the migration discourse. See also Alejandro Portes and József Böröcz 'Contemporary Immigration: 609 – 612.
[18] Ibid.

For most of their history until the 1960s, the West Indian islands have been British colonies. As such, the political and socio-economic structures of the islands were modelled after a British template and implemented in a manner that would most benefit the 'mother country'.[19] Therefore from the beginning, the economy was structured to operate within a closed system, in which the islands along with the American colonies would provide Britain with the tropical products that she required, while also functioning as the necessary outlets for her export goods.[20] As such, the capitalist system implemented was one that favoured a mono-agricultural system. According to Selwyn Carrington in *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade 1775 – 1810,*

> despite the general desire among West Indian planters to diversify their agricultural system, the British West Indian economy remained one based mainly on the production of sugar and rum. Given the demand for sugar in the American, British, and European markets, the planters were forced not only to continue but to increase production.[21]

Built within this system however was an unhealthy dependence upon benificient and favorable external markets for both economic growth and progress.[22] Evidence of this was seen in the islands' reliance upon: the American colonies and Britain for their supply of food and lumber,[23] the British Empire Markets, who were the exclusive buyers of their products; and on the British policymakers for the economic procedures that governed their economies.[24]

In the years following the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and slavery itself in 1834,[25] this dependence rendered the islands powerless to fight against several factors

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[19] John U. Ogbu, *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), 243.

[20] See discussion in Chapter 2: Formation, on the development of the slavery within the West Indies. Selwyn H.H. Carrington, *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1775 1810*, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2002), 13.

[21] Ibid., 16.

[22] During the American War in 1775, the islands were cut off from an economy with which theirs was intricately linked. As a result it produced widespread changes in the manner in which business was conducted in the islands. It inhibited their unrestricted access to cheap food items and lumber, and discontinued the practice where they paid for those goods with tropical products. As a result other suppliers within the empire had to be found – albeit at a more costly price. The net result was that it set off a system that would decrease the profitability of the plantation system in the islands. See Selwyn H.H. Carrington, *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade,* 116 – 136.

[23] Ibid., 25. See also Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 67.

[24] Ibid. pp. 13 – 91 It is necessary to note that this exclusive trade with Britain produced several problems for the West Indian economies. Following its independence, the islands were no longer able to 'freely' trade with America, and as such they lost a key consumer of rum.

[25] One of the campaigns advanced during the abolition of slavery was encouraging consumers in Britain not to purchase sugar produced in the West Indies. They were encouraged to consume sugar manufactured in

which undercut the profitablity of the sugar, thus resulting in dire economic developments within the islands. One reason why the sugar plantations were no longer profitable was because without the slave trade and slavery, there was no longer a source for 'free' labour.[26] Although indentured workers were brought in by the colonial goverment from India and China, the damage was already done – they had began to lose their monopoly on the world sugar production. Coupled with these developments were the emergence of competitiors in the world sugar market. These competitiors, specially Cuba, Brazil and the United States[27] posed a serious threat for three specific reasons: one, the presence of slavery in their societies – thus providing the necessary 'free' labour needed to maintain profitability; two, greater investment into various modernization techniques that not only increased sugar production but made the process more efficient; and three, the land used in sugar production was not as overworked as that in the West Indies. The loss of the sugar monopoly was further exacerbated by the passage of the Sugar Duties Act by the British government in 1846. Essentially this Act "provided for a reduction in the tariff on sugar until the tariff on sugar from all sources were equalized by 1854".[28]

Beginning in the 1880's the West Indian sugar industry experienced further deterioration fueled by the emergence and the popularity of beet sugar within the global market. This critical period was dealt two additional blows by the serious outbreaks of cane disease (the borer and blast stains) and several natural disasters – mainly hurricanes. All of these factors combined with the depression in world sugar prices, largely due to the increase and variability within the worldwide sugar production, to have a profound impact upon the West Indian economy. In the islands where sugar still maintained its economic dominance, these external developments combined with several internal factors to produce several dire consequences. First it resulted in many sugar estates undergoing foreclosure due to non-payment of the quit-rent. Second, it produced severe economic

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East India instead. See William Fox, *An address to the people of Great Britain, on the propriety of abstaining from West India sugar and rum,* 6th ed., (London: M. Gurney, 1791).

[26] By deciding to withdraw their labour from the plantations, the ex-slaves became a surplus labour force. It was this group that eventually sought out other avenues of employment first through regional and later through international migration. See: Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, 'Globalization and the development of a Caribbean migration culture' in Mary Chamberlain, ed., *Caribbean Migration,* 194.

[27] Within the United States, major sugar production was conducted in the state of Louisiana.

[28] Ransford W. Palmer, *Pilgrims from the Sun: West Indian migration to America* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 2.

hardships within the other industries that were associated with the sugar industry.[29] Third, having emerged from slavery, the island's population was experiencing dramatic increases, largely a result of falling death rates and rising birth rates. The end result was an environment marked by high population growth, high unemployment and limited resources for advancement. It should be noted that although various ventures, like banana production and tourism were implemented as alternate and viable options for creating growth in the island economies, their contribution to the island's economies were minimal.[30] Although the banana industry facilitiated the development of small scale farming,[31] it was susceptable to various meteorological activity – especially hurricanes, diseases and the eventual competition posed by several Central American countries. For tourism however, although it would later play a significant role in the island's economies, during this time it was in its infancy and therefore just a minor player in the islands.[32]

Having discussed several of the circumstances associated with the sugar industry that helped to create an environment where it became increasingly difficult for West Indians to survive in their home islands we will now examine some of the regional and international factors that encouraged them to migrate. Following emancipation in 1834, as many slaves were leaving the plantations throughout the other West Indian islands, the planters in Trinidad and Guyana were implementing programs recruiting these workers. The benefits being offered were: wages that were twice those of their 'home' islands; and in the case of Trinidad – free passage and land for cultivation. These programmes

[29] One notable example was in the area of peasant farming. Since these farmers sold the majority of their crops to the plantation workers, the decline in sugar industry also spelt a down turn in their economic viability.

[30] It is necessary to note that both of these industries were heavily funded by outside investors, especially those from the US. As such, these industries continued to perpetuate the islands dependence on external agents for internal growth. Also it bears noting that since the investment came from external sources, the profits generated within these industries were funneled back to those same sources outside the islands. Thus although both of these industries provided some measure of growth in terms of employment, the overall benefits to the island's economy was minimal.

[31] Banana could be grown on small plots in areas not suitable for sugar-cane.

[32] It should be noted however that the tourism industry is also plagued with competition because they are other 'idyllic' destinations in the world. Coupled with this is the islands' location. They are located in a region that experiences several types of meteorological activities. These include pleasant tropical weather, tropical depressions and even the possibility of a category 5 hurricane. All of these especially a volatile hurricane season can affect the tourism industry. Another factor that may affect the industry is the socio-political events occurring within and outside the region. Thus, while an increase in criminal activities within the region may result in a decline in the tourism industry, so too will external events like the September 11th terrorist activities in the US.

resulted in a large movement of seasonal workers mainly from the Eastern Caribbean.[33] This regional movement highlights two signicant developments: the plantocracies need to preserve their labour; and the emancipated slaves securing and exercising the benefits of their freedom by deciding what labour activities were most beneficial for their livelihood.[34] Beginning in the mid-1880's the region began experiencing a dramatic shift in its orientation and European dominance was consistently being replaced by the U.S.[35] This was evidenced in the "huge foreign investment, primarily American, in infrastructural projects such as the canal in Panama and railroads in Central America and Cuba. These investments accelerated the growth of export agriculture in those countries and, in the process, generated a considerable increase in the demand for unskilled workers from the British West Indies".[36] For many West Indians, the beginning of the twentieth century marked a period of dramatic change in terms of migration. The completion of the Panama Canal in 1914, was followed by the crash in sugar prices in 1921, the implementation of restrictive immigration legislation and the Great Depression in the U.S. As such, several avenues that were previously open were now closed and many "West Indians were being repatriated from places like the United States and Cuba".[37] For many of these migrants who had become accustomed to higher wages, and higher standards of living, the situation they encountered upon their return produced

[33] It should be noted that people from the northern Caribbean were numerically absent from this venture due to the travel distance involved. For many of the workers, this migration was temporary – i.e. they would arrive when work was scarce in their own islands and then return home when the crops were being harvested. See discussion by: Dawn Marshall, 'A History of West Indian Migrations: Overseas Opportunities and "Safety-Valve" Policies' in Barry B. Levine, ed., *The Caribbean Exodus* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1987), 16 – 20; and Bonham C. Richardson, *Economy and Environment in the Caribbean,* 29 - 37.

[34] See: Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, 'Globalization and the development of a Caribbean migration culture' in Mary Chamberlain, ed., *Caribbean Migration*, 189.

[35] The beginning of America's assertion of dominance over the region was most visible in their intervention in the in the Spanish –American war in Cuba in 1898. America's victory in this war resulted in the Treaty of Paris in which they 'secured' Cuba's independence and had Puerto Rice annexed to them by Spain. Following Cuba's independence US military governance was implemented until the signing of the Platt Amendment in 1903, which dictated the relationship between America and Cuba. These two documents were consistent with the new interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine by Theodore Roosevelt – which essentially allowed exercise international policing authority. From a regional perspective, the "Caribbean itself was to become America's closed sea, … [where] as assistant Secretary of State Loomis stated in 1904: 'no picture of the future is complete which does not contemplate and comprehend the United States as the dominant power in the Caribbean Sea'". See Eric Williams 'American Capitalism and Caribbean Economy' in Hilary Beckles, Verene Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Freedom: Economy and Society from Emancipation to Present* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1996), 342.

[36] Ransford W. Palmer, *Pilgrims from the Sun,* 3; See also Eric Williams *Capitalism and Slavery*, 345.

[37] Dawn Marshall, 'A History of West Indian Migrations' and "Safety-Valve" Policies' in Barry B. Levine, ed., *The Caribbean Exodus*, 24.

marked discontent. It should be noted that during this time some West Indians were able to find work in the oil fields in Venezuela and and the oil refinery in Curaçao, however this was limited and as such many West Indians had no choice but to remain at home. During WWII as the U.S. experienced a labour shortage due to the deployment of servicemen, West Indian migrant workers were brought in to fill the gap. Simultaneously, many West Indian men were called into the service of the 'mother country' as she defended herself against the advance of Hitler's regime. In the years following the war, as the U.S. became closed, many West Indians chose to migrate to Britian, where they had the unrestrictive acess granted to all British citizens. For these migrants, the decision to migrate was influenced by several factors including responding to the appeal to come and help rebuild the 'mother country' as well as seeking out opportunitites to 'better' themselves.

In the 1960s, as many West Indian islands gained their independence, they were faced with the task of how to advance the changes began after WWII, by shifting their economies from the traditional dependence on agriculture, especially the sugar monoculture, to a more diversified economy. In several islands: Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana, minerals were found and formed the main thrust of the new development.[38] However, to accomplish this development, capital was needed. This was supplied by foreign corporations, primarily American and which in turn limited the contribution to the overall economic growth of the region.[39] The decades of the 1960's and 1970's saw the implementation of several programmes aimed at developing the local economy through actively participating in the decisions that affected the economy and also exercising local majority ownership in the multinational companies operating within the islands.[40] In Jamaica some of these economic reforms were conducted under Michael Manley's leadership in the following manner:

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[38] The mineral found in Jamaica and Guyana was bauxite, from which aluminum is created. Oil reserves were found in Trinidad and Tobago.

[39] See Anthony Payne and Paul Sutton, *Charting Caribbean Development*, James Ferguson, *Far from Paradise : An Introduction to Caribbean Development* (London: Latin America Bureau, 1990). The profits from the corporations did not remain in the West Indies to be reinvested within the economy but were sent to the 'home country' to be invested there. Also, they did not result in any substantial job creation within the islands. See discussion in: Ransford W. Palmer *Caribbean Dependence on the United States Economy*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1979) and Michael Manley *The Politics of Change: A Jamaican Testament* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1975).

[40] See discussion on the different programs implemented in Payne and Sutton, *Charting Caribbean Development,* 2-15. The approaches implemented from the 1960s to the beginning of the twenty first century are: the modernism approach; the dependence approach; the neo-liberal approach; and the

> His government instituted price freezes and limited imports, especially on some luxury goods. He renegotiated his government's contracts with the six North American bauxite companies operating in the country, making it possible for Jamaica to receive increased taxes and acquire a majority interest in the country's important Bauxite mines.[41]

Through these reforms, the people of Jamaica were able to educate their children, acquire adequate housing and receive sufficient compensation for their agricultural produce. During his tenure as Prime Minister, Manley "joined the campaign led by OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries] nations for a New International Economic Order, fought for an end to the isolation of Cuba, [and] campaigned … against South African apartheid".[42] Such actions however, made Manley a "thorn in the side of Uncle Sam".[43] The consequences were immediate. According to Girvan, "retaliation by the Bauxite companies, a U.S.-sponsored campaign of economic and political destabilization, and excessive public spending brought the economy to the brink of bankruptcy and into the jaws of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)".[44] Michael Manley described this process in the following manner:

> A country resorts to the IMF when it is experiencing a foreign exchange crisis. … Typically, the remedy begins with currency devaluation, strict control over spending in the government budget and a tight monetary policy aimed at restricting credit and increasing cost of money.[45]

These occurrences were not limited to the Jamaican context but were also experienced within other West Indian Islands. The net result was an economic decline and an increase in political violence in several islands, specifically Jamaica, Guyana and Grenada. It bears noting that although the West Indian islands were never militarily invaded by the U.S., except for Grenada, American influence was still pervasive in that "their economies [were] restructured by U.S. investment … [and the islands] continue to depend upon U.S aid, trade and tourism".[46] Thus the Caribbean, as a whole, became a region in which

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globalisation and regionalism approach. Anthony P. Maingot 'The English-Speaking Caribbean' in Mark Falcoff and Robert Royal eds., *The Continuing Crisis: U.S. Policy in Central America and the Caribbean* (London: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1987), 133; Perry Mars, and Alma H. Young., eds., *Caribbean Labor and Politics: Legacies of Cheddi Jagan and Michael Manley* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), xiii, xiv.

[41] Perry Mars, and Alma H. Young 'Introduction' in Perry Mars and Alma H. Young, eds., *Caribbean Labor and Politics*, xiv.

[42] Norman Girvan, 'Michael Manley: A Personal Perspective' in Perry Mars, Alma H. Young., eds., *Caribbean Labor and Politics,* 6.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., 7.

[45] Manley Michael, *A Voice at the Workplace*, (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1991), 238.

[46] Catherine A. Sunshine, and Keith Q. Warner, eds., *Caribbean Connections: Moving North* (Washington D.C: Network of Educators on the Americas, 1998), 7.

during the 1980's the "U.S. [had successfully reshaped] the agenda of politics and political economy to the point where it was able to lay down the parameters of what could be done and even what could be articulated".[47] This reshaping was accomplished in two ways: through the implementation of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI); and the adjustment measures imposed on several islands by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the U.S. agency for International Development (USAID).[48] In all, these measures helped to create an environment within the Caribbean in which the islands' economic vitality and growth was dependant upon U.S. investment, market opportunities, and tax/tariff regimes. As a result many countries placed their social and political stability in jeopardy as they strove, sometimes desperately, to grow economically within the international market place.

Immigration Laws and Acts

Due to the prominence of the economic factors in the discourse on West Indian migration, insuffucient attention is given to the role that immigration laws and Acts play in this process. Such oversight is problematic however because it is the laws and Acts that determine the level of access that the migrants have to the host nation. Thus although the 'push' and 'pull' factors may exist both in the sending countries and the receiving metropoles, and the migrant may desire to migrate, unless they are granted access via the immigration laws and Acts, the West Indian migrant will not be able to legally migrate.[49]

The majority of West Indians came to Britain following the implementation of the Nationality Act in 1948, which changed their status from British subjects to that of British citizens. This citizenship entitled them to the rights and privileges accorded to all citizens of the Commonwealth. Therefore, their entry into Britain was not based on the approval of a visa application but was secured by virtue of being born within the Commonwealth. This open access to Britain occurred at a time when the U.S. was

[47] Anthony Payne and Paul Sutton, *Charting Caribbean Development*, 12.
[48] Ibid., 13.
[49] Immigrant Laws and Acts also dictate which types of migrants will have access to the country in question. In this regard, these policies are instrumental in determining the composition of the migrant population in any given country. In the case of Canada see: Joe T. Darden, 'The impact of Canadian Immigration Policy on the Structure of the Black Caribbean Family in Toronto' in Eric Fong, ed., *Inside the Mosaic* (London: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 146-165.

becoming more restrictive. The McCarran-Walter Act which was implemented in 1952 reduced the number of West Indians from any island in the Caribbean to a strict national quota (100 people). This act was biased towards immigrants from Europe and thus allowed them to enter the U.S. in large numbers. The impact of this open access to Britain for West Indians was portrayed by the Jamaican poet Louise Bennett as "colonization in reverse".[50] Britain's openness however, changed in 1962 with the approval and implementation of the Commonwealth Immigration Act. The main thrust of which was to limit the number of Commonwealth citizens entering Britain from Asia, Africa and the West Indies. The 1962 Act also increased the period of residence for Commonwealth citizens (plus British subjects and Irish citizens) applying for registration as Citizens of the UK and Colonies from one year to five years.[51] This act was followed by the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1968, which highlighted the distinction made between the Commonwealth citizens who had close ties to the United Kingdom and who were allowed unrestricted entry into the country versus those citizens who had no such ties and were thus subject to immigration control. Further immigration restriction came with the Immigration Act of 1971, which introduced the 'right to abode' concept. The right to abode essentially provided an individual with the right to enter the United Kingdom without government permission and to reside and to work in the country without restriction. However, under this act, Commonwealth citizens qualified for the right of abode only if they, their spouse, parents or grandparents were closely associated with the United Kingdom and the Islands.[52] So although this act allowed for family reunification, it restricted all other access to Britain.

Within United States immigration history, the majority of West Indian immigrants comprise a part of the 'second wave' of immigration. This 'new wave' of immigration began with the signing into law of the Hart-Cellar Immigration Reform Act in 1965 which removed the national quota system that was established in 1924. Simultaneously, Britain was closing it doors to Commonwealth migrants with the implementation of the Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962. These two Immigration Acts essentially produced a shift in the destination for West Indian migrants from Britain to the United

[50] Louise Bennett, *Jamaica Labrish,* (Kingston: Sangster, 1966), 179 - 180
[51] See 'Chapter 21' *Commonwealth Immigration Act 1962*. Website: http://www.britishcitizen.info/CIA1962.pdf, accessed March 12, 2008.
[52] These islands were the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. For a detailed documentation of the statutes associated with the Immigration Act of 1971 see: Margaret Phelan, *Immigration Law Handbook* (London: Blackstone Press Limited, 2001 [1997]), 4-67.

States. It is necessary to note that although the shift in the migratory pattern occurred in the 1960's, the influx of West Indians in large numbers to the United States, did not occur until the beginning of the 1980's. Statistically, Jamaicans formed the majority of the West Indian migrants. According to Joseph Salvo and Ronald Ortiz, "in the 1980's alone, Jamaica sent 213,805 people to the United States – a full 9% of its total population of 2.5 million people".[53] These numbers are also mirrored for Guyana and to a smaller extent for Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and the other West Indian islands. According to Holger Henke, in this period "the immigrants from the English-speaking Caribbean consisted increasingly of single women or female-headed households".[54] This was due to two main reasons: one, "the liberation implied in the Hart-Cellar Act allowed women to take advantage of the family preference scheme";[55] and two, "shifts in the United States labour market proved beneficial for a number of Caribbean women with or even without higher education",[56] as such many were able to find jobs as "general domestic helpers, or caregivers for children, the elderly and even pets".[57]

The access granted by the Hart-Cellar Act was supported by the Supreme Court decision in 1982, which ruled that, "undocumented immigrant children had a right to go to school".[58] Thus West Indian children, who had entered the U.S. with their parents as illegal immigrants, were now entitled to an education and a means of advancing themselves. In its drive to tackle the illegal immigration, the U.S. implemented the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986. On one hand it was argued that this Bill would stem the wave of illegal immigrants who were "likely to displace Americans",[59] in the workplace. The opposing view was that this immigrant Act would result in the "undocumented being exploited until they are … deported".[60] The main features of this legislation were "establishing penalties against employers who hire illegal immigrants and legalizing those illegally in the country before 1982 [or 1986, in the case

[53] Joseph Salvo, and Ronald Ortiz, *The Newest New Yorkers: An Analysis of Immigration into New York during the 1980's* (New Yory: New York Department of City Planning, 1992), 40.
[54] Holger Henke *The West Indian Americans* (Westport: Greenwood press, 2001), 29.
[55] Ibid., 31.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ellis Cose, *A Nation of Strangers: Prejudice, Politics and the Populating of America* (New York: William Marrow and Company, Inc., 1992), 190.
[59] Ibid., 180.
[60] Ibid., 182.

of agricultural workers]".[61] As a result legal status became the requirement for work eligibility. By the end of the 1980's America was experiencing a drastic labour shortage especially in the health and educational fields. As a result, legislation was introduced in 1988 "aimed at meeting the nation's purported labor needs".[62] For the next two years this legislation was argued within the House of Representatives and Congress and passed in 1990. The Immigration Act of 1990 served to revise "the quota preference system to provide substantially more immigration of skilled workers, more 'slots' to reduce delays for certain groups of immigration-eligible family members, and greater diversity in the countries of origin of the immigrants".[63] One result was that many skilled labourers in the West Indies and other countries, like nurses and teachers, were recruited for jobs in America.

Image

Historically, the West Indies, has maintained a strong migration culture. This migratory culture extends from the migration pattern of the pre-Columbus indigenous American peoples, the voluntary migration of European sojourners, buccaneers and adventure, the involuntary migration of thousands of Africans, and to the present. Within the history of migration however, it is important to note that each migration occurs in a specific time period, and although it is related to the past ones, it is distinct from it. Having stated this, it is essential to note that the influence of the past on present migration should not be dismissed. Past migrations, especially the individual narratives, served to link families members across generations and national boundaries and also faciliated a process whereby each 'new' generation was "socialized in a way of life and livelihood conditioned by migration".[64] A crucial characteristic of this socialization was the construction of an image, that was associated with the place of destination.

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[61] Doris M. Messiner, et al., *International Migration Challenges in a New Era.* (New York: The Trilateral Commission, 1993), 27.
[62] Ellis Cose, *A Nation of Strangers*, 200.
[63] Doris M. Messiner, et al., *International Migration Challenges in a New Era,* 27.
[64] Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, 'Globalization and the development of a Caribbean migration culture' in Mary Chamberlain, ed., *Caribbean Migration*, 194; Monica Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas' *International Migration Review* 23, no. 3, Special Silver Anniversary Issue: International Migration an Assessment for the 90's, (autumn, 1989): 642 – 643.

This interaction with the past further highlights two factors that are vital within the migration process: the importance of the familial dynamic, and the role of family in the creation of an image. The family not only approves of the migration, encourages members to leave to improve the social mobility of the family, but also enables it. In many cases, they are the source of emotional, financial, childcare, and other types of assistance, which make migration possible. As Mary Chamberlain rightly concludes, the decision to migrate was not solely an individual enterprise. It was a family endeavour, one focused on the welfare and the improvement of the family unit.[65] With regards to image formation, it should be noted that places, both local and distant, gained meaning only in terms of how they were perceived by the individual. This perception, was constructed from fragments of information that a person received and internalised concerning that particular place. For the local environment, the individual's personal experience played a crucial role in shaping their perception. With regards to the distant place, the perception was constructed from both the information (sometimes irrespective of the degree of accuracy of that information) and the material goods that were received from that place. In many cases, the source of this information, in the form of narrative 'history', and the material goods were supplied by various family members.[66] Hence, the images created by an individual, and which influenced decisions that they made were not formed in a vacuum but in the interaction with the external environment. This external world, constituted a place relative to their point of reference be it a country, parish or a district. Based on the evaluation of their present local and external environment, and combined with the 'historical' narratives received from others, an image was created which influenced how that individual perceived migration. Thus when faced with an economically deprived situation, and schooled in the narratives about the opportunities available in other countries, many individuals and their families may decide to migrate. What are some of the images that are created about Britain and the United States, that encourage families to migrate to these places? The two prominent images are 'the Mother Country' and 'the Promised Land'.

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[65] Mary Chamberlain, "Migration, the Caribbean and the Family" in Goulbourne Harry, Chamberlain Mary, eds., *Caribbean Families in Britain and the Trans-Atlantic World* (London: MacMillan Educational Ltd, 2001), 36.

[66] With the America's increased hegemony with the Caribbean region another source of information is various types of media as well as the numerous tourists who frequently visit the region. During the height of migration to Britain, additional sources of information were found in the educational curriculum and various cultural practices in which Britain was presented as the standard to which all should aspire.

The Mother Country

Throughout the West Indies and the rest of the British colonies the 'Mother Country', a term used to refer to Britain, was a dominant image. It connoted a mother-like, nurturing, and caring relationship that Britain was perceived as having towards her colonies. From the imperial perspective, the islands of the West Indies owed their existence and history to Britain. It was this mother that 'birthed' this region and orchestrated its liberty from slavery. In the West Indies, these beliefs found a place of acceptance, to the extent that "in more senses than one, Britain was the 'Mother Country' and commanded an intellectual, cultural and moral authority".[67] As an immigrant to Britain stated:

> So much was taught down our throats about the Mother Country and so forth … from the time we were training school from Britannia, raise the flag on Jubilee day and drink your lemonade, you know, we think of England.[68]

Thus the information received in school, from the culture depicted by the white minority in their midst, and from the society at large, portrayed a magnificent mythical image of the 'Mother Country'. It was a place of untold beauty, civilization, Christianity, morality and culture. It was second only to heaven, with streets paved with gold, and having abundant provision – a land flowing with milk and honey.[69] Like a loving mother, the 'Mother Country' was perceived with open arms, ready to welcome her children. Thus, for many West Indians, "this imperial myth, [portrayed in the 'Mother Country' image], had been translated into concepts of sanctuary and salvation, and had been memorised in the mnemotics of food and colour".[70] It was this image that influenced their decision to migrate to Britain. In both the dissemination of the information and the subsequent construction of an image, space was not given to the white population inhabiting any class, other than that of the elite. As a result, the reality the migrants encountered upon their arrival was a massive shock. For one respondent the fallacy of this image was revealed during a train ride from the continent to Britain. He says:

> While I was travelling on the train I looked out and I stood up, [and look] through the window and I said "Oh my", I'm [not going] where I thought I'm going, what I really

[67] Mary Chamberlain, *Narratives of Exile and Return*, *Warwick University Caribbean Studies* (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1997), 70.
[68] Interview cited in Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 75.
[70] Ibid.

> thought England would be, you'd ask me what why do I say that, but you see coming to England I saw a white man in the field and he's working … in the cabbage field and I said "I'm fooled," you know, where I'm going is not what I thought because you see, [I] have never seen a white man [with a hoe] working in the field.[71]

Further confirmation of this fallacy was provided when he reached his destination and saw that "the English people, they sweep the floor".[72]

The Promised Land

For most of its history, the United States has been perceived as the 'Promised Land' to the countless groups of immigrants that ventured to its shores. For the Puritans and other Europeans in the seventeenth century it was a land of religious freedom – a place where they could practice their faith without religious persecution. Later, for the Irish, Italians and Jews in the twentieth century, it was a land of opportunity – a place to rebuild their lives and thrive politically and economically. According to the American scholar Oscar Handlin, the issue of immigration is the very heart of American history – "the immigrants [are] American history",[73] they cannot be separated. For the West Indians in the Caribbean, this image of the U.S. was not only alive and flourishing, but given the islands proximity, it was one that was continuously being reinforced. Thus the U.S. remained the 'Promised Land' – a land "abounding with economic opportunities for anyone willing to work hard and show some pluck and sense of adventure. [It was also a place where] a person could take charge of his [or her] own destiny".[74]

For many West Indians, this image of 'the Promised Land' was not only synonymous of the U.S. but was also attributed to one particular city – New York City.[75] Thus New York City became for many West Indians "the political and economic power

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[71] Interview with first generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People*. (New York: Grosset & Dunlap: 1981), 3.
[74] Gary Gerstle, 'American Freedom, American Coercion: Immigrant Journeys in the ''Promised Land''', *Social Compass* 47, no. 1, (2000): 64. One recurring theme amongst the second generation respondents in Brooklyn is that prior to coming to America, their parents or grandparents did not have much. Coming to America has enabled them to provide a better life for their children. As a result, there is the expectation from the parents and understanding amongst the children that they will live in such a manner to make their family proud. The worst that a second generation child can do is bring dishonour to the family – by not making use of the opportunities available, being arrested, incarcerated or deported back the to West Indies because of criminal activities.
[75] See Roy Simón Bryce-Laporte, 'New York City and the New Caribbean Immigration: A Contextual statement', *International Migration Review* 13, no. 2, (summer 1979): 216.

base of [the current] capitalist system".[76] It was this capitalist system that was seen as determining the vitality of West Indian island economies. Within this framework New York City was deemed to be a place abounding in opportunities to improve one's economic status and attain a level of modernity and civilization that their respective countries could not provide. This image was so prominent within the West Indian psyche to the extent that "no visit or residence in the United States [was] felt to be complete without at least one New York City experience".[77] Thus, migrating to New York City came to signify for many immigrants the 'fulfillment of a dream', or the 'accomplishment of a great achievement'. It was within this context, that New York and the U.S. by extension , became one of the principal places for West Indian migration.

Diaspora realities

This section will investigate two inter-related issues. Firstly, it examines some of the social and historical reasons for the formation and perpetuation of West Indian religious communities in New York City and London. These reasons are not only multi-dimensional but also intricately related. Like all other social groups, these religious communities emerged within a specific socio-economic and political context and also at a certain period in the immigration histories of the receiving countries. It is within this context that the histories of the specific religious communities will be studied and analyzed. Secondly, it will highlight some of the transnational activities that West Indian immigrants, and the immigrant Pentecostal churches are engaged as they situate themselves within the social, cultural, and religious landscape of the Dispora contexts.

United States

Upon their arrival in the United States, many West Indians encountered a society, which Mary Waters describe as "fundamentally, a racist society".[78] For although the civil rights movement had resulted in formal rights and privileges being afforded to African Americans, at its core, the American society was still racist. Instead of the blatant subjugation of African Americans, there was a "system based more on a subtle intersection of past economic discrimination, class and race interactions, and increasing

[76] Ibid., 215.
[77] Ibid., 216.
[78] Mary C. Waters, *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 42.

separation of local political power from ultimate economic power".[79] It is imperative to note that prior to their arrival, West Indians did not perceive the American society through rose tinted windows of racial equality and harmony.[80] They arrived with some knowledge of the racial dynamics that operated within the society. However, as many later learnt, this foreknowledge did not adequately prepare them for the stark reality of their present social contexts. For within the poverty stricken, high crime, predominantly African American ghetto communities in which they lived,[81] they encountered a system in which various levels of society were geared towards keeping African Americans at the bottom of the socio-economic and political ladders. Faced with such a stark reality, many migrants realized how correct Derrick Bell was in his assertions that "the racism that made slavery feasible is far from dead [even] in the last decade of the twentieth-century America".[82] They also found sufficient evidence detailing how subtle discrimination was producing what Cornel West described as, the shattering and demise of the African American community.[83] This was a system driven by the "provision, expansion, and intensification of *pleasure.* …In the American way of life, [this] *pleasure* involve[d] [having] comfort, convenience, and sexual stimulation".[84] The internalization of these ideas which endorsed "the predominance of the market-inspired way of life over all others" by some members of the African American population resulted in what West sees as "possible triumph of the nihilistic threat in Black America".[85] For many African Americans, the socio-economic depravity within their areas of residence not only inhibited their access to *pleasure* but also created an environment in which self-contempt and self-hatred became prominent features of their lives. This cycle of self-hate and nihilism was further buttressed by the daily barrage of visual images on the television confirming "that theirs [was a] disgraceful form of living".[86]

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[79] Ibid.
[80] See Nancy Foner, 'Race and Color: Jamaican Migrants in London and New York City', *International Migration Review* 19, no. 4 (winter 1985): 714 – 715.
[81] Kyle D. Crowder, 'Residential Segregation of West Indians', 79
[82] Derrick Bell, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 3.
[83] Cornel West, *Race Matters*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 11-20
[84] Ibid., 17.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Bell Derrick, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well,* 4.

Coupled with these factors were various political, socio-economic, and education policies that were perceived as seeking to keep African Americans[87] in their present state. Evidence of these policies is most visible in the comparison of poverty rates and median household income for African Americans to those of non-Hispanic Whites and Asians. According to the 2000 United States Census statistics, the African American median household income [$29,470] continues to be remarkably less than those of non-Hispanic Whites [$46,305] and Asian [$53,635] households.[88] In regards to poverty, the Census records revealed that the African American community still had the highest poverty rate of any racial group, 22.7% versus 7.8% for non-Hispanic Whites and 10.2% for Asians.[89] These Census findings are significant because they also indicate that poverty within the African American minority is predominantly located within metropolitan cities and the South.[90] Incidentally, these were some of the same metropolitan cities in which the majority of the West Indian immigrants resided. As a consequence, many West Indian immigrants, like some of their African American counterparts are continuously faced with the ravages of nihilism, discrimination, drugs, crime, poverty and unemployment.[91]

For many West Indian immigrants, the combination of these realities with the subtle insidious agendas focused on keeping members of the Black population at the bottom of the socio-economic and political ladders, have resulted in them seeking to distance themselves from African Americans. Many immigrants believe that their failure to do so could result in them being perceived and treated as African Americans.[92] Given

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[87] In particular the lower-class African Americans among whom the majority of the West Indian migrants reside.

[88] See 2002 U.S. Census Bureau, website: http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2002/cb02-124.html, Accessed March 16, 2005.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid. See also: Nell Irvin Painter, *Creating Black Americans: African-American History and its meanings, 1619 to the present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 390 – 391.

[91] It is necessary to indicate that many of these social conditions were not specific to the US context but were also noticeable within the British context. However, within this environment, it was the West Indians who were at the bottom of the socio-economic and political ladders and it was the African immigrants who were striving to distance themselves.

[92] It is worth interrogating this statement however, because in reality West Indian immigrants are perceived by the wider society to be African American. Therefore the distinction that they strive to perpetuate only becomes apparent when they speak, or mention their country of origin. For the second generation this distancing is particularly hard to maintain since they lack the distinct West Indian accent. As such they have to find other ways to articulate this distinction. See discussion in Chapter 5: Creating Space.

the dominant negative stereotypes attached to the African American population this was not seen as a viable option.[93] This 'distancing' is accomplished on two levels.

One, by establishing distinctive residential enclaves where they could intentionally preserve certain aspects of their ethnic heritage, language and culture, thus enabling them to "maintain the distinction between themselves and American Blacks and to avoid relegation to poor Black neighborhoods or to American's most oppressed racial group".[94] Two, "by establishing networks, social clubs, organizations, festivals, and so on, Caribbean peoples who have migrated to North America have made it abundantly clear that they are not a somewhat casual gathering of rather disjoined individuals".[95] Instead the immigrants have "established themselves as a veritable and clearly identifiable community of people living in urban America".[96] It is necessary to note that these social organizations also function as places of empowerment for the immigrants.

Through several social organizations, especially religious communities, the immigrants found places where they could occupy various leadership positions, have their ethnic identities treated as normative and find "job opportunities and interlacing ties which reinforce parental authority and values vis-à-vis the second generation".[97] Among the immigrants were some who were affiliated with denominations that were already established within the American context. Thus upon their arrival, they began to attend the neighbourhood churches that were associated with these denominations.[98] However, some immigrants found the rituals and structures within these churches to be very different from what they were accustomed to in their home country. In order to re-capture a worship style

[93] Within the inner-city context, the majority of the African American population can be classified as lower-class. As such, they constitute one segment of society that is particularly vulnerable to incarceration, broken families, involvement in drugs and other criminal activities. In separating themselves from their lower-class neighbours and striving for economic mobility, the West Indians migrants are more aligned with the middle-class African Americans. This is a group which earns "between $34,000 and $54,400 (in 2003)", and is primarily comprised of university educated individuals. See Nell Irvin Painter, *Creating Black Americans,* 377 – 387. In this manner many West Indians sought to fulfil their goal of improving themselves while simultaneously avoiding becoming a part of a population that was perceived to be involved in social decline.
[94] Kyle D. Crowder, 'Residential Segregation of West Indians', 108.
[95] Henke Holger *The West Indian Americans,* 38.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Mary C. Waters, 'Ethnic and Racial Identities of Second-Generation Black Immigrants in New York City', 804.
[98] These denominations included: Anglican/Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist and various Pentecostal groups.

that was reminiscent of home some immigrants began to meet for fellowship and prayer.[99] It was from these prayer/fellowship meetings that many of the West Indian immigrant religious communities subsequently developed.

Brooklyn Context:

Having examined the wider U.S. context in which the West Indian religious communities emerged, it is also necessary to give attention to the specific context in which they are located. The two religious communities studied, Miracle Temple Ministries and Flatland Church of God, were located in Brooklyn, the most populous borough in New York City.

Within Brooklyn, Miracle Temple Ministries is situated in the Brownsville neighborhood, while Flatlands is found in the Flatlands neighbourhood. Since the early 1900's, Brownville has acquired a notorious reputation within NYC as a place for noxious activities, where "ignorant and dirty people reside".[100] Though predominantly Jewish until the 1960's its population is now largely African-American, Hispanic and West Indian. This particular neighbourhood is plagued with many social ills. Not only does it have a relatively high unemployment rate in comparison to other neighbourhoods, but over half its population lives below the poverty line and receive public assistance.[101] On a national level, Brownsville is known for the largest concentration of low income public housing. This neighbourhood has eighteen New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) buildings. Within this environment marked by pervasive economic decline and limited means of advancement, there is growing involvement in violent crime, and

[99] This dynamic is also noted among African Christian immigrants from Africa. See: Garnet A. Parris, 'The African Dispora in Germany seen through the axes of Storytelling: Of Law and security and of Religious Tradition and Thelogy,' unpublished PhD thesis: University of Birmingham, March 2008, 108-109.

[100] Wendell Pritchett, *Brownsville, Brooklyn: Blacks, Jews, and the changing face of the ghetto* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 2.

[101] It is essential to note that many of the homes are headed by single parents – mainly women and that many of these families have existed in a state of poverty for several generations. Within the neighbourhood, the incarceration rate is also significant, with many males being arrested at some period in their lives. Evidence of this reality is seen in the large number of inmates current in New York jails and prisons who are from Brownville. See Brooklyn community district 16 report. http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/lucds/bk16profile.pdf, accessed March 6, 2008; and the New York City Police department 73rd precinct's statistical report on crime in Brownsville - http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/downloads/pdf/crime_statistics/cs073pct.pdf., accessed March 10, 2008

various gang[102] and drug activities. Brownsville is also noted for the numerous incidents of violence in its schools and for the high rate of school dropouts amongst its students.[103]

Flatlands, is a neighbourhood that is currently undergoing extensive demographic shifts. Once a predominantly Jewish neighbourhood it is now home to many West Indians. According to a resident in the neighbourhood, "these new immigrants have made the leap to the middle class and homeownership, supplanting older Jewish residents who have moved or died".[104] Today however, the Jewish population has been experiencing an increase as orthodox Jewish families move into the area. In comparison to the Brownsville, Flatlands is considered to be a 'better' neigbourhood with less crime and fewer people living below the poverty line. One visual indicator of this is seen in the housing facilities available within the community. The majority of which are houses and not apartments.[105] There is also a noted absence of apartment buildings including those that form a part of the New York City Housing Association. It is necessary to note however, that this community does have its share of social ills, most notable in regards to its schools – where some schools are falling below citywide and statewide standards in English and Math and one high school in particular has acquired a reputation for violent behaviour.[106]

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[102] These include the Folk Nations, Blood, ABG (Anybody Gets It) and the Dread gangs. See Eastern District of New York Press Release, May 25, 2005, http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nye/pr/2005/2005may25.html, accessed March 4, 2009.

[103] Within many schools passing through metal detectors and swiping identification cards has become the normal practice for entering the school buildings. These schools also experience several other problems like low test scores and high truancy rates.

[104] Quote by Ms. Sandy Benet cited in Dulcie Leimbach, 'If You're Thinking of Living In/Flatlands; Diverse, Well-Groomed Residential Area' *The New York Times*, 1 February 2004, 1. See website: http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D05E0DD1038F932A35751C0A9629C8B63, accessed March 10, 2008.

[105] Brooklyn community district 18 report, http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/lucds/bk18profile.pdf, accessed March 6, 2008.

[106] In 2002, only 34 percent of the student body at Roy H. Mann Intemediate School, I.S 78 met the standards in English, while 39 percent met that for Maths. The South Shore High School has experienced several stabbing incidences in the past decade and in 1992, a student was murdered at the school. Ibid.p 3.

A brief history of immigrant Pentecostal churches in New York City.

Miracle Temple Ministries[107]

Miracle Temple Ministries was founded in May 1971. It was the result of a meeting between Bishop Ermine Stewart and eight people, in which he shared a 'vision' to establish a church. Subsequently, Bishop Stewart and the eight people began to meet regularly for prayer meetings. Over time these prayer meetings were replaced by the Sunday and midweek services. The first 'official' church service was held at 744 Dumont Avenue, Brooklyn, with Rev. Bent the overseer of the Church of the First Born as the guest preacher. At its inception, Miracle Temple was established as the New York branch of the Church of the First Born, a denomination that originated in Jamaica. In this regard, it was one of a series of church plants and pastorates conducted by Bishop Stewart.[108] In the years that followed, Bishop Stewart was actively involved in the establishment of other church branches in the United States – East Orange, New Jersey and Miami, Florida- and Canada - Toronto.

Beginning in 1982, the Church of the First Born – New York embarked on a venture that would result in it becoming the headquarters of an international ministry and its senior minister, Bishop Stewart, its founder and general overseer. This undertaking was in the form of a series collaborations between Bishop Stewart, the members of the church, and some interested church leaders, to establish several branches in Jamaica and the US. The churches in Jamaica included: Molynes Road, in the nation's capital of Kingston (1982); May Pen, in Clarendon (1991); Christiana, in the parish of Manchester (1993); and Santa Cruz, which was located in St. Elizabeth (2006). During this period, The Church of the First Born-New York also became affiliated with two Jamaican churches, Watchwell in St Elizabeth in 1990 and Old Harbour, St. Catherine in 1997. In the U.S., the churches which were instituted in Kissimmee (1999) and Fort Lauderdale (2006), were products of the relocation of some church members from New York to

[107] This brief account of the history of Miracle Temple was derived from the information documented on the church's website and from interviews with several members. See website: http://miracle-temple-ministries.org/1748/index.html, accessed February 2007.

[108] Following his initial contract with The Church of the First Born in his early twenties, Bishop Stewart was trained and commissioned to pastor the Mount Carmel Church of the First Born in Coleyville, Manchester, in 1956. Following his tenure at Mount Carmel, he spent several years in England and in Jamaica, prior to migrating to the United States in 1967.

Florida, who upon their arrival in these cities began to meet together for fellowship and worship.

The Church of the First Born's position as the ministry headquarters was further secured by the rebuilding of the sanctuary which is located at 965 Thomas S. Boyland Street in February 1998. At the dedication of the new edifice on November 11, 2001, two significant events occurred. The first was to change the name of the church from 'Church of the First Born' to 'Miracle Temple Ministries'. The second was to publicly state that the mortgage on the building was paid in full. As a result, Miracle Temple Ministries was presented as an organisation that was separate from the Church of the First Born denomination. In so doing, Miracle Temple could now fully exercise the responsibilities that accompanied its status as the headquarters of the ministry, namely offer instruction and financial assistance to the other branches.

Currently, Miracle Temple has approximately 250 members.[109] Women constitute about sixty five percent of the total church population, and are between the ages of twenty and eight five. The teenagers and children comprise about fifteen percent of the congregation while approximately twenty percent are men, ages twenty and older. Within the leadership structure, the majority are men, with about twenty five percent of females. According to the executive church secretary, about sixty percent of the members live in Brooklyn, with the other forty percent residing in Queens, and Long Island. However it was observed that although many members live in Brooklyn very few reside within the immediate neighbourhood. During fieldwork it was observed that the majority of the members were employed in the healthcare and other industries. Among the young adults, the majority were graduates of universities, while most of the teenagers and children were regularly attending school. As a whole, the members of Miracle Temple are upwardly mobile and in many respects would be considered to be a part of the middle-class African American community.

[109] The demographics documented here are a composite of the information received from the executive secretary and what I observed during my fieldwork. Concrete data was not available due to the lack of access to the church membership records.

Flatlands Church of God[110]

Flatlands Church of God started as a Sunday school ministry out of the basement of Bishop Donald Williams' house. The initial congregation included Bishop Donald Williams, his wife and their four children.[111] The original 'vision' was to begin a Sunday school in their home and hand out flyers in the surrounding neighbourhood to advertise the availability of this ministry. However only two Sunday school sessions were held in their house because in early December 1998, Mrs. Sarah Williams, now Reverend Williams, saw a building for rent on Avenue J in the Flatlands area of Brooklyn. This building located at 4197 Avenue J, which was formally a club, was eventually procured for their meetings. Having located a place for worship, Bishop Donald Williams contacted the Church of God district overseer about 'officially' establishing a ministry. In the two weeks that followed, Bishop Williams and his family worked to get the building ready for occupancy. On a Sunday in mid December 1988, Flatlands Church of God was started with a Sunday school session in the morning[112] and the official church opening that evening. The congregation remained at 4197 avenue J for eight years and paid approximately $800.00 in rent each month. Prior to beginning this ministry in Brooklyn, Bishop Williams has been involved in ministry in various parts of England. It was during this time that he received his license as a Church of God minister. In the 1980's the Williams family were invited to relocate to New York by one of his sisters who saw the American context as being a better one for improving oneself.

Following the establishment of Flatlands, Bishop Williams sat and successfully passed his ordination exams. He was subsequently ordained as the minister over the congregation at Flatlands in Brooklyn. In 1996, the church began the process of seeking a building to purchase. Several building were considered including their present location, however, they were all deemed inappropriate since they did not allow for any future expansion of the current building. Following these developments, Rev. Sarah Williams contacted a real estate agent, who told her that the building, which they had previously

[110] Information on the church's history derived from the Church's bulletin and from an interview with the senior pastor and founder of the church.
[111] The Williams children continue to play an instrumental role in the church. One of the daughters is the music minister; the eldest son is the license minister and the youth minister while the youngest son plays either the keyboard or the drums during the Sunday services. .
[112] In his interview Bishop Williams stated that twelve people attended the Sunday school that Sunday morning. For the 'official' church opening, churches in the area were invited to participate in the celebration.

considered was still available. As a result, a decision was made to acquire the building. According to Bishop Williams "the Lord know what we should have, what was best for us".[113] After purchasing the building, it was uncovered that the building was previously owned by the mafia. He further states: "from a human perspective this building would not have been good for our church. … Parts of the building were probably used for prostitution [and] where the choir sits used to be a stage which was used for dancing. [However] such a mindset would have stopped them from getting what God wants for you".[114] Along with the church sanctuary, offices, and church hall, the building also has several rentable apartments. These apartments which are rented to members of the church and people in the community have become a substantial source of income for the church.

Flatlands in contrast to Miracle Temple has approximately 120 members, of which about seventy five percent are women aged twenty-five and above.[115] The male members comprise about 10 percent of the total church population, and they range in age from twenty-three to seventy. The final fifteen percent are made up of the teenagers and children. In terms of leadership, about ninety percent are male and ten percent are female. The majority of the members live within Brookyln, and several families including the senior minister reside in the immediate surroundings. The other families, who constitute the minority, live in Long Island and Queens and commute to church. While conducting fieldwork it was observed that the church had a mixture of retired people and those who were employed in the healthcare, technological and other industries. Within Flatlands, the majority of the young adults are university graduates. Although many members are economically upwardly mobile, there are some who are part of the low income group. These members are normally retired with fixed incomes, and who may be receiving financial assistance from their children.

[113] First generation male minister in Brooklyn, dated March 2007.
[114] Ibid.
[115] These demographics are a composite of the information received from the executive secretary and what I observed during my fieldwork. Concrete data was not available due to the lack of access to the church membership records.

Britain

For the West Indian immigrants who arrived aboard the *Windrush*[116] in June 1948 and those who followed them, they entered as citizens of the British Empire. For many of them, this journey marked a shift from the Islands, which existed on the periphery, to the very focus of their existence – Britain, the 'mother country'. Upon arrival however, many of the immigrants did not find the expected beneficent mother who would welcome her children with open arms. In her place they found an emotionally detached relation who treated them with disdain and marked coldness. This reaction, which on the surface seemed to convey a slight displeasure with the influx of West Indians, was in fact much more. According to Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, what the West Indian immigrants encountered was "an exclusive and impenetrable image of British society, backed up by the ideology of race and racial superiority, which had for so long been an essential pillar of imperial power".[117] It was an image that declared them 'not welcome'. Their status as British citizens was inconsequential because to the British public, "culture and money in England do not, as in the West Indies, 'whiten'".[118] To be British was to be White. Consequently, the immigrants found themselves thrust into "a moral environment which steadfastly refused to acknowledge change, or the possibility of change, in the nation's self image".[119] Thus their arrival "in their light-weight suits and straw hats and felt sombreros, teeth chattering, shivering in the draughty, freezing, alien, impersonal, busy atmosphere of the railway stations",[120] was perceived as an invasion that would "disrupt their stable pattern of life".[121] This romanticised notion of a stable pattern of English life thus became something to protect at all costs. It should be noted that this 'protection' was not limited to one area, but was incorporated into several facets of daily life – specifically, employment, accommodation and family life.

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[116] The *Empire Windrush* is the name of the ship that transported 492 passengers from the Caribbean to Tilbury. This journey was the beginning of a large scale immigration of West Indian Commonwealth citizen to Britain. Thus the arrival of these Caribbean passengers also signified the beginning of the ethnic diversity which would change many facets of the British society.

[117] Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The irresistible rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), 4.
[118] Nancy Foner, *Jamaican Farewell*, 42.
[119] Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush*, 4.
[120] Edward Scobie, *Black Britannia: A History of Blacks in Britain* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company Inc., 1972), 196.
[121] Ibid., 197.

In these three areas, many West Indians were perceived to be the source for many of the social ills which were evident within the society. In the employment arena, the age-old perceptions of Blacks as lazy, irresponsible, and intellectually deficient governed their interaction with their British employers.[122] Although the 'unproductive' behaviour that was attributed to the West Indians could also be found amongst some of the other workers within various companies, this reality was overlooked.[123] To their fellow employees and the trade unions members, the West Indian immigrants were perceived to be a huge threat to their livelihood. Not only were they seen as "weakening their bargaining power"[124] in the fight for higher wages, but their very presence was viewed as threatening the amount of overtime work that would be available, and diminishing the status of a job.[125]

For the West Indian immigrant, their role as a scapegoat found its most prominent manifestation in the area of accommodation. As Ruth Glass argues in *Newcomers,* upon their arrival, the immigrants had very little choice on where to live. They were constrained by the location of their jobs, the inaccessibility of outlaying areas, and the designation of central London regions for working to upper class. Their only option was "patches of inner London which [had] been neglected, and which [had] already been for some time in the process of decline and social downgrading".[126] In these deplorable conditions, they were subjected to further exploitation, harassment and discrimination. Many of the migrants found themselves at the mercy of slum landlords and other extortionists,[127] who charged them exorbitant rents for the small, deteriorating, and cheaply furnished living spaces. For those who decided to seek alternative accommodation, they found themselves up against the 'colour bar' maintained by many white landlords.

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[122] Sheila Patterson, *Dark Strangers,* 92, 103

[123] Ibid., 81. The truth found within this statement is also applicable to the U.S. context where some employers and West Indian immigrants would perceive some African American workers to lazy and irresponsible. See Mary Waters, *Black Identities*.

[124] Ibid., 95.

[125] Ibid., 144.

[126] Ruth Glass, *Newcomers,* 48.

[127] John Western, *Passage to England: Barbadian Londoners Speak of Home* (London: UCL Press Limited, 1992), 81. One such slum landlord was Perec "Peter" Rachman. There are also cases of other landlords, both West Indian and whites who exploited the migrants. Refer to Sheila Patterson, *Dark Strangers,* 181 and Anita Jackson, *Catching Both Sides of the Wind: Conversations with Five Black Pastors* (London: The British Council of Churches, 1985) , 89.

In the area of family life, the migrants were declared deviant and dysfunctional, failing to conform to the professed 'standard' of the British family. This standard rooted in the Victorian period, espoused the image of a nuclear family into which children were born, as well as concepts of "control and self-discipline".[128] This Victorian 'standard' also advocated that "the indiscriminate procreation of children has come to be regarded as improvident and uncontrolled; illegitimacy is a matter of shame and contempt; and the act of sex itself is usually invested with a puritan feeling of innate sinfulness".[129] Against this standard of propriety was placed the 'deviant' West Indians family lifestyle, noted for its high level of illegitimate birth and sexual promiscuity.[130] West Indian men were especially seen in a bad light – as men of sinister character who wanted to corrupt 'proper' British society. By adhering to this viewpoint, the British overlooked the cultural dynamics that were at play.[131] For many within British society, the evidence spoke for itself, the West Indians' lifestyle would eventually lead to moral disintegration in the society. Opposition to the perceived threat posed by the West Indian immigrants came in several forms. The most visible examples were the Nottingham and Notting Hill riots of 1958 and the subsequent implementation of Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962. Both mediums served to uncover the underlying feeling of rejection exhibited by the British masses towards the West Indian immigrants.

The West Indian immigrants' reaction to this treatment by the British masses was diverse and multifaceted. For many, their initial reaction was one of disillusionment. They had never expected that they would be un-welcomed -after all they were British citizens, speaking the Queen's English, having British manners, knowing British history, and thus believing that they 'belonged'.[132] Thus the immigrants realized that the idea which was perpetuated in the Islands that one's status could be based on merit and not the

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[128] Eugene C. Black, 'Sexual Roles: Victorian Progress?' in Eugene C. Black, ed., *Victorian Culture and Society* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 384.
[129] Sheila Patterson, *Dark Strangers*, 227.
[130] Douglas Manley, Ivo de Souza, Albert Hyndman, et al. 'Family Problems' and 'West Indian Welfare in Three Cities' in S.K. Ruck, ed., *The West Indian Comes to England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1960), 123, 162.
[131] The level of illegitimacy noted amongst immigrants in the 1960's was similar to figures found in the West Indian islands. The practice of women living independently of their children's father is a vestige left over from slavery when parents lived on different plantations. Following emancipation, this lifestyle continued to be perpetuated among many of the Black population as a result of the social and economic conditions that existed within the society.
[132] Nancy Foner, *Jamaica Farewell,* 41. Anita Jackson, *Catching Both Sides of the Wind,* 88.

colour of one's skin was a lie.[133] In Britain, all that was seen was the colour of their skin. As such, the country for which they had fought, pledged their loyalty, and given their strength, had no place for them. Another reaction was the creation of enclaves and social organisations. It is important to note that these enclaves and social organisations were formed due to both internal and external forces. The lack of housing options and the colour bar that they experienced, forced West Indians to live together in a manner that would form a buffer from the outside society. Within the different enclaves and social organisations, many West Indian immigrants had their culture and personhood affirmed. They had found a space of belonging where they were no longer classified as 'outsiders'. These enclaves also provided immigrants with a platform from which they could address the discrimination and racism that they faced within the society.

Upon their arrival, many of the immigrants were members of the established denominations.[134] However the lack of welcome that they received in these denominations coupled with the need for community resulted in them seeking alternative places to worship.[135] Thus many became members of the emerging Black-led Churches. These churches were mainly Pentecostal, and were founded by some West Indian migrants who were associated with various American denominations. After their arrival in Britain many of these Pentecostals would conduct regular prayer meetings in their homes as a way to have fellowship and worship in a manner that was reminiscent of 'home'. It was from these meetings that the many of the Black-led churches developed.

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[133] In her research among Jamaican migrants in London Nancy Foner argues that in the West Indies a system was perpetuated that allowed an individual to be judged based on their education, wealth, and manners, and not the colour of their skin. However, upon their migration, many of these migrants came to realize that "culture and money in England [did] not, as in the West Indies, 'whiten'". Instead they were now in a context where the colour of the skin had attained seminal importance. See Nancy Foner, *Jamaican Farewell,* 24-42.

[134] These denominations were: Anglican, Methodist and Baptist.

[135] See Rev. Dr. Lewinson's profile of Willesden in the NCTG 50th anniversary booklet*, 1953-2003 50 Years in His Service*. The rejection that the West Indian immigrants encountered also resulted in the formation of various clubs and Island groups where the migrants could find support, entertainment, and various forms of social and cultural capital.

Willesden context

The above analysis has presented a brief overview of the British context that facilitated the emergence of the immigrant faith communities. However it is also necessary to examine the specific context in which these organizations are located. Willesden New Testament Church is situated in Willesden; one of the towns that comprise the borough of Brent located in northwest London. Once a predominantly rural area, Willesden underwent dramatic population growth beginning in the mid 1800's. This population growth was stimulated by the geographical expansion of the London metropolitan area to include Willesden and the opening of the Willesden Green Metropolitan Railway station in 1879.[136] In the early part of the twentieth century as Willesden became a predominantly working class area, a small Irish community was formed. This community experienced rapid growth during WWII. The population of Willesden underwent further diversification with the coming of the Jewish refugees following WWII and of migrants from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent in the 1960's. Beginning in the 1960's the area also began to experience an economic decline. Redevelopment was implemented within the area in the 1980's, when various business people operating along the High Road were allocated monies to improve their businesses.[137] It is necessary to note however that although the area has undergone some redevelopment, it has recently had several incidences of knife and gun crimes.[138]

A brief history of immigrant Pentecostal churches in London.

Willesden New Testament Church of God

The emergence of the New Testament Church of God (designated as NTCG onwards) denomination and the Willesden Church was a direct result of the influx of West Indian migrants to Britain in the 1950's. Among the new arrivals from the Caribbean were several ministers and members of the NTCG, a West Indian Pentecostal denomination that was affiliated with the Church of God denomination in Cleveland,

[136] The Metropolitan Railway was later renamed the Metropolitan Line. Adam Spencer, *Willesden: Britain in Old Photographs* (London Borough of Brent: Sutton Publishing, 1996), 5, 88
[137] See website: http://www.brent-heritage.co.uk/willesden.htm accessed March 10, 2007.
[138] See articles: 'City Lawyer robbed then murdered,' *BBC online news*, 13 January, 2006, website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/4609826.stm; and 'Dawn raids against Crime 'Crews',' *BBC online news*, 16, July 2003, website: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/3071091.stm, accessed March 10, 2008.

U.S. Upon their arrival in England, many of these NTCG ministers and members were surprised at the attitude exhibited by the English towards religion and Sunday church attendance.[139] As stated in the previous section, as many migrants sought to worship in the mainline churches of which they were members back in their homelands, some were faced with discrimination and rejection, while others were welcomed. For some of those who were welcomed within the established churches, the relationship proved to be a temporary one "as the newcomers seemed to be too noisy [to their British counterparts], [while for some of them] the worship was not as inspiring as they were used to 'back home'".[140] Simultaneously, there was the growing awareness among some of the migrants of the rampant spiritual inertia and the lack of fellowship that was beginning to characterize the burgeoning West Indian community. In order to rectify what they perceived to be a significant problem they began establishing meetings in their homes to "preserve their spiritual life until they could return to the Caribbean".[141] It was one of these fellowships that gave rise to what is now Willesden NTCG.

Willesden NCTG, formerly Kilburn Church, was started in 1957 by Pastor Eric Swaby. He along with six Christians would meet regularly for prayer meetings and house fellowships at his home in Kilburn. From this location, the group moved to a Scout hall on Kilburn High Road. However after a few weeks they had to relocate to another Scout hall on Greyhound Road, in Kensal Green. The church remained in this location for several years and experienced tremendous numerical growth as "believers, especially from Jamaica, were attracted to this place for worship".[142] While at the Greyhound Road location, Pastor A.J. Cummings became the senior minister of the church.[143] He was later replaced by Reverent E.G. Kellywright who with the congregation "purchased a redundant and dilapidated Methodist church building at Willesden High Road, in 1964".[144] Following this relocation, the church's name was changed to Willesden NTCG. The members of the congregation were committed to the renovation of the building and gave their time, skills and monies to the project.[145] In the

[139] Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope* (Nottingham, London: Grove Books Limited, 1992), 17. To many of these migrants, Britain was perceived as a very loose and permissive society.
[140] Ibid., 18.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid., 20.
[143] Although Pastor Swaby left the Kilburn church to pioneer a church plant in Deptford, he still held the position of district pastor of the emerging Kilburn district.
[144] Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope*, 20. This building was purchased for £10, 000.
[145] Ibid. According to several members of the church, members would pledge about twelve and a half pence per week towards the cost of the building. In regards to the labour, they completed the work

years that followed, the church was pastored by ministers R. Kennedy, K. Peterkin and I. Brooks and in 1986, the Reverend I. Lewinson, the current minister, was transferred to Willesden. During his pastorate the church has experienced several changes. The most notable has been the diversification of the church's leadership structure evident in the addition of two women and several second generation members to the Pastor's council[146] and the ordination of a woman as the youth Minister. In terms of demographics, the congregation is predominantly comprised of second generation migrants. This is due to several of the first-generation members dying or relocating to the West Indies upon their retirement. However despite this loss, the church continues to grow as several second generation migrants, and other members of the society become members of the church. As a result, Willesden remains one of the largest congregations in the NTCG in the UK with a membership of 486.[147] The female members form approximately fifty-five percent of congregation while the men and children/youth are about twenty five precent and twenty percent respectively. The congregation is also very diverse in terms of their economic status, with some of the members being retired while others are employed in education, media, healthcare and other industries. Like Miracle Temple and Flatlands, Willesden's member are encouraged to gain various qualifications in order to improve their economic status. In terms of residence, the majority of the members live within Brent and the surrounduing counties of Northwest London.

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themselves – many members who were carpenters, painters etc, used those skills in the renovation. As the men worked, the women would also come out in the evenings to clean up. As such, the work was a collective effort. See Interviews with first generation minister, June 2007, and first generation female dated July 10, 2007.

[146] This is the governing council of the church and is comprised of 12 members.

[147] This figure was cited by Rev. Dr. Lewinson in his profile of Willesden. See NCTG 50th anniversary booklet, *1953-2003 50 Years in His Service*.

Transnationalism and immigrants

Traditionally, immigrants have been perceived by scholars within a binary categorization, i.e. settler versus sojourner.[148] In this model, the settler/immigrant undergoes a process of permanent dissociation and relocation in which former life patterns are abandoned and new ones are forged.[149] For the sojourners/migrants on the other hand, they are conceived as transients whose residence in the host country is of a temporary nature since they will eventually return home or move to another location. Within contemporary migration however, this binary categorisation has become increasing less convincing as immigrants engage in "processes by which [they] forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement"[150] - including linkages between various Diaspora contexts. These trans-border processes enables the immigrant to simultaneous inhabit multiple worlds by developing and maintaining a multiplicity of relationships – familial, religious, cultural, socio-economic and political – within several societies or contexts. It is necessary to state that the presence of transnational activities is not a novel phenomena as evidence of such activities abounds within earlier migrations. According to Portes et. al., "Precursors of present immigrant transnationalism have existed for centuries. […] [However,] they lacked the elements of regularity, routine involvement, and critical mass characterizing contemporary examples of transnationalism".[151] For Portes and other scholars, it is the emergence of various technological revolutions in the arenas of telecommunication and travel resulting in the compression of space and time which has facilitated the

[148]Thus scholarship on immigrants was primarily focused on their acculturation and incorporation and "limited to the ethnic communities they created in the host society". See José Itzigsohn, et al., 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism: narrow and broad transnational practices,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (March 1999): 317; Roger Rouse, 'Questions of Identity; Personhood and collectivity in transnational migration to the United States,' *Critique of Anthropology* 15, no. 4 (December 1995); Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[149] Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1994), 4.

[150]Ibid., 7.

[151] Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt, 'The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (March 1999): 224 – 225.

proliferation, and the continuation of the transnational networks with increasing efficiency and speed.[152]

Comprised within the transnationalism discourse is a diversity of activities engaged in by individuals, their social networks, their communities, and local and national governmental structures in three prominent sectors: economic, political and socio-cultural.[153] These activities include: various transnational economic initiatives – (e.g. export/import, investments); the co-opting and mobilizing of the resources and loyalty of migrants by local and national governmental agencies in the home and host contexts; the proliferation of home-based religious and cultural organisations that institute branches in the host context as well as at home; and the maintenance of familial linkages across the national borders of the countries of settlement and origin. In regards to transnational activities, there is some debate concerning what activities should be considered transnational. For Portes, transnational activities are those that are regular and sustained, and primarily economic.[154] Although transnational economic enterprises have profound effects on various social processes including national development in the country of origin and the economic mobility of immigrants, such a focus overlooks the manner in which other everyday activities can be described as transnational. For as Itzigsohn et al argues, some transnational activities and the social networks that they facilitate are "constructed through the daily life and activity of immigrants".[155] Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc in contrast, promote a more inclusive definition that includes everyday social practices – from economic ventures to the reconfiguration of

[152]Steven Vertovec, 'Conceiving and researching transnationalism,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (March 1999): 417. See also: José Itzigshon et al., 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 318; Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt, 'The study of transnationalism,' 223 – 224. It is essential to note however that although these globalization features may have created an environment for the expansion of certain transnational networks, they are, not in themselves, the primary cause for the development of the networks. As documented earlier, one enduring aspect of West Indian life is a focus on region and international migration. Pivotal within this framework is the establishment of various networks linking those who migrated and those who remained behind. See Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, 'The Making of West Indian Transmigrant Populations: Examples from St. Vincent and Grenada' in, *Nations Unbound,* 52-93.

[153] Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt, 'The study of transnationalism,' 220 – 222.

[154] Alejandro Portes 'Transnational communities: their emergence and significance in the contemporary world system', in Roberto Patricio and William C. Smith, eds., *Latin America in the World Economy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 151–168.

[155] Itzigsohn et al, 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 318.

social and cultural spaces. However this definition as Itzigsohn et al notes, "suffers from being too unspecified".[156]

Therefore in determining what activities are transnational, one has to first, acknowledge the presence of both the economic and the everyday practices within the rubric of transnational activities. Second, realize that both the regular/sustained trans-border activities and the occasional ones play a significant role in "all aspects of [the immigrants'] life, from their economic opportunity, to their political behaviour, to their individual and group identities".[157] Third, find a way to map transnational practices[158] and thus distinguish the different levels of engagement. All three of these issues can be addressed by implementing a typology of 'narrow' and 'broad' transnational activities.[159] According to Itzigsohn et al, 'narrow' transnational activities refer to immigrants' participation in "economic, political, social, or cultural practices that involve a regular movement [across nation borders], a high level of institutionalization, or constant personal involvement".[160] In contrast, transnational activities in the 'broad' sense refers to "a series of material and symbolic practices in which [immigrants] engage that involve only sporadic physical movement between the two countries, a low level of institutionalization, or just occasional personal involvement".[161] It is this typology that will be implemented for the analysis of transnational activities by West Indian Pentecostal immigrants in New York City and London.

One feature that bears noting in regards to the discourse on contemporary migration is that not only are immigrants themselves challenging traditional assumptions about their permanent dislocation from the homeland, but also the organizations in which they are involved – especially those of a religious nature. As Afe Adogame notes in regard to African Diaspora churches, "these [religious] communities are connected

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[156] Ibid., 323.
[157] Ibid., 318.
[158] Sarah J. Mahler, 'Theoretical and Empirical Contributions Towards a Research Agenda for Transnationalism' in Michael P. Smith, and Luis E. Guarnizo, eds., *Transnationalism From Below* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002 [1998]), 64-100.
[159] Another typology that is employed in the transnational discourse is that of transnationalism from above or below. Where 'transnationalism from above' connote the activities in which states and corporations are engaged while transnationalism from below refer to the activities of international migrants. See: Michael P. Smith, and Luis E. Guarnizo, 'The locations of Transnationalism', in *Transnationalism From Below*, 3-30
[160] Itzigsohn et al, 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 323.
[161] Ibid.

through various ties in the realm of religion, economy, friendship, kinship, politics and increasingly so through the virtual space of telephone calls, new media such as the Internet which have become a central feature of development and maintenance of diasporic identity".[162] Another key feature of the transnationalizing of religion is that it "integrates migrants into a powerful, resource-rich international religious network they can access regardless of their political citizenship"[163] or their visa status. In this manner, Diaspora churches also become subjects for interrogation and analysis.

In this section, transnational activities will be investigated from the perspectives of the West Indian immigrants and the Pentecostal churches and within the 'broad' and 'narrow' transnational typology. It is important to note that the transnational practices discussed will not be representative of all of the activities in which West Indian immigrants in New York City and London are engaged. Instead it will focus on those activities that were observed during the ethnographic fieldwork that was conducted in both contexts. In so doing, we will be able to arrive at some specific conclusions about West Indian immigrants at a 'grassroots' level within these two urban locations.

Transnational activities of West Indian immigrants

Prior to discussing some of the transnational activities in which West Indian immigrants are engaged, it is necessary to state that the categories documented below do not exist as separate activities in the lives of the immigrants. They occur simultaneously and in some situations each category may facilitate the proliferation of the others.

Economic activities

The majority of the economic transnational activities in which the West Indian informants were engaged can be classified within the broad typology. For although the activities enabled the informants to maintain contact with those in the home context, they are not institutionalized neither did they involve constant trans-border movements. One common transnational activity noted among West Indian migrants is sending remittances

[162] Afe Adogame, 'Up, Up Jesus! Down, Down, Satan! African Religiosity in the former Soviet Bloc – the Embassy of the Blessed Kingdom of God for all Nations' *Exchange* 37, (2008): 323.

[163] Peggy Levitt, *The Transnational Villagers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 160.

to relations in the country of origin.[164] These remittances as various scholars have noted provide a means of extending the revenues of relations within the home context.[165] Among the informants, the sending of remittances occurred within the contexts of supporting an ageing parent, siblings or a child living in the home country. One informant stated the following:

> My daughter spent her formative years in Jamaica. I was ill, and she had to go down and stay down there. I just couldn't manage to work and see to her. It was too much of a strain with my medical history and so she was down there for the first five years. You know intermittently I saw her but she started her schooling down there.[166]

It should be noted that although this informant does not expressly mention sending any remittances, within this particular context not to do so would be considered a grave offence and could have significant consequences for both the parent and the child. Within many West Indian families the sending of one's child to reside with a family member is normally coupled with an informal agreement that the parent will send money to help with the cost of rearing the child.[167] In some cases, as various scholars have observed, the receipt of economic assistance can be directly related to the kind of treatment that the child left in the relative's care would receive.[168] Therefore if a parent broke this agreement they would not only lose status in the eyes of their relations and the community, but they could also place their child at risk of being ill-treated and perceived as the offspring of a 'worthless' individual. The loss of status however is not only borne

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164 According to Rosemary Vargas-Lundius, 'in 2002, remittances to the Latin America and Caribbean region amounted to approximately USD 32 billion'. Rosemary Vargas-Lundius, 'Remittances and Rural Development' a paper prepared for Twenty-Seventh Session of IFAD's Governing Council, Rome, 18-19 February 2004, see webpage: http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/27/roundtable/pl/discussion.pdf, accessed July 20, 2008. Money is also sent on an institutional level see section on transnational activities of Pentecostal churches.

165 Mary Chamberlain, 'Migration, the Caribbean and the family' in Harry Goulbourne and Mary Chamberlain, eds., *Caribbean Families in Britain,* 36; Itzigsohn et al, 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 325, 327.

166 First generation female in Brooklyn dated April 3, 2007. Later in the interview it was stated that the daughter stayed with the informant's sister.

167 George Gmelch, *Double Passage: The Lives of Caribbean Migrants Abroad and Back Home* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 51.

168 See: Karen Fog Olwig, 'Narratives of the children left behind: home and identity in globalised Caribbean families' *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 25, no. 2 (April 1999); Tracey Reynolds, *Caribbean Mothers: Identity and Experience in the U.K.* (London: The Tufnell Press, 2005), 36; Elaine Bauer and Paul Thompson, *Jamaican Hands Across the Atlantic* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2006), 6-7, 192-195; and David Lowenthal *West Indian Societies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 220.

by the parent but also the relations in the country of origin. For in the context of rising cost of living - evidenced in the price for food items, public utilities, transportation, and school tuition –remittances give relations access to outside resources. Coupled with the monetary remittances, West Indian immigrants also send or carry food and consumer goods to relations and friends in the home country.[169] Through these products, the immigrants are able to "provide the low-income sectors with access to consumer goods that these sectors could not buy with their local income".[170] As a result, their relations acquire the status of being perceived as being 'better off' by other members of the community. Thus in a context where the remittances or consumer goods are not forthcoming, the relations may be demoted to the level of those in the community who are struggling to make economic ends meet.

An additional economic transnational activity noted among some of the informants was the purchasing of properties and/or houses, or the building of houses in the country of origin. These economic transnational activities are conducted on a sporadic basis and are normally engaged in by those intending to relocate to their country of origin.[171] Notification about the availability of properties and buildings is acquired through various means. These include: advertisements in one of the Diaspora newspapers or online national newspapers,[172] working with a real estate agent that specializes in return migration; and advertising within certain religious and/or social organizations. Within this process, the purchasing of properties and houses, as well as

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[169] A common activity among some West Indians is that of sending a barrel. This is a large cylindrical container is made of plastic or reinforced cardboard with a metal cover and bottom. This practice has resulted in the emergence of the phenomenon of 'barrel kids' within the Jamaican society. These are children of individuals who have migrated and whose existence is intricately tied to barrels containing food, clothing and other consumer goods that are shipped to the island. See: George Mulrain, 'Caribbean' in John Parratt, ed., *An Introduction to Third World Theologies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 171.

[170] Itzigsohn et al, 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 327.

[171] It is necessary to note that several of the West Indian islands have policies focused on the relocation of their expatriates. See the following websites. For Jamaica: http://www.returningresidents.com/rr12.html, accessed July 22, 2008.

[172] Advertisements for real estate agents, properties and buildings available for purchase can be found in the classified section of the US and UK editions of several printed national newspapers as well as in the online versions. See: the Jamaican Gleaner: http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/; the Trinidadian Guardian: http://www.guardian.co.tt/classified/class.html; the Barbadian Nation: http://classifieds.nationnews.com/results.php?category_id=2&acTst=Grr. In the New York area, information can be gained from the Diaspora newspaper – NY Carib News: http://www.nycaribnews.com/, accessed July 22, 2008.

the construction of houses are brokered through various agents, both in the country of settlement and their homeland.[173] For David, the only informant who has being involved in this process, his experience is described as follows:

> I was buying Jamaica paper to look for land and house. …They can look at somebody's house, take the photograph and send it to you. So you have to be careful. So I said I want the land. … [During a church service with a visiting lady Evangelist from America] the Lord spoke to her and she said, "Who wants land come down"! [What is being suggested here is to come to the altar for prayer]. Well I come down. … because [I] want[ed] land. …. Not long after that I saw a land advertised in the Jamaican Gleaner. [It was for] six acres of land. … So I phone the man, make contact and go and meet with him in Birmingham. … So I made contact and I pay down something on it. When I go back down [to Jamaica], I go and see the land, [then] I phone back [to London] to release the rest of the money for the land.[174]

The issue of return migration is particularly important within transnationalism discourse because of the impact that it exerts on other transnational activities – e.g. social, and cultural. In order to return to their country of birth, the immigrant will need to maintain both economic and social contacts with those in the home country.[175] Simultaneously the immigrant may also need to maintain various cultural/political distinctions that may continue to mark them as a foreigner within the Diaspora context, in order to prepare themselves for their eventual return.[176] Although many did not return to their home country the hope of return continued to foster the maintenance of ties to home.[177]

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[173] In some cases these agents are family members who will be asked by the relative abroad to go and inspect the property or house prior to it being purchased, or to oversee the construction process.

[174] First generation male in London, dated July 9, 2007. In the quote documented above it is pivotal to note the prominence of 'divine guidance' in this economic venture. It is only after responding to the call for prayer concerning land that the informant was able to find the property he wanted to acquire. It also bears noting level of integrity that was involved in the transaction which is in sharp contrast to the fears the informant had expressed earlier in the quote about being cheated.

[175] This entails not just the cost of buying a house, property, providing for ones relations but also ensuring that these returning immigrants will be able to maintain a comfortable standard of living in the country of origin.

[176] See Reuel R. Rogers, *Afro-Caribbean Immigrants and the Politics of Incorporation*, 156 – 163; George Gmelch, *Double Passage,* 276 – 277; 285; First generation female in London dated July 24, 2007.

[177] For some immigrants this hope of return and the orientation towards home that it fostered was facilitated by the lack of belonging that they experienced in the new social context. See Robert Beckford, *Dread and Pentecostal,* 14.

Social activities

The majority of the West Indian informants were engaged in both narrow and broad social transnational activities. Of the narrow activities, the most common was maintaining communication with relations and friends in the homeland. For one informant, this involved calling Jamaica several times every week. When asked about the frequency of her communication she replied, "I have to do that, I love my family so I have to keep in touch with them".[178] For another informant, the frequency of her contacts with her relations, especially her siblings, was due to her position within her family. She states:

> As the matriarch of the family I've had to really, you know, think not of myself. I have to think of them because […] my mother passed [when] I was 32. So I just had to really take on that mantle and over the years I send for them one by one and eventually my sister and her son came in 1997.[179]

This frequency of communication between London, New York City and the West Indies is itself produced and perpetuated by the global expansion within the telecommunications sector. As a result of the internet, cost effective telecommunications and low cost phone cards, West Indian immigrants are now able to maintain instantaneous [180] and cost efficient communication with relations in the home country. Within the home context, this telecommunication process is further facilitated by the expansion of mobile communication services, resulting in individuals in remote rural areas now having greater communicative access to the wider world[181].

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[178] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[179] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007.

[180] This type of communication is facilitated through internet software like windows live messenger, Skype, etc. As a result, several distance and time variables are compressed or removed and both the individuals back home and abroad become knowledgeable of events as they occur.

[181] One such organization is the Digicel group. Launched in Jamaica 2001, it introduced the first GSM mobile service into the country. In the past seven years Digicel has become one of the largest mobile operators in the Caribbean and a new entrant into Central America. As of March 31, 2008, they had 6.54 million customers. See websites: http://www.digicelgroup.com/group/; http://www.digiceljamaica.com/home/index_v4.php, accessed July 22, 2008. One recurring comment that I have heard from relatives and friends while on visits to Jamaica is that Digicel works in places where no other network is available. Coupled with the high level of coverage, Digicel plans are economically reasonable. Thus, individuals for all strata of the society are now able to afford a mobile plan. During a visit to the farming community of Coleyville in Jamaica I observed a farmer who was on his way to his farm talking on his mobile phone while riding a donkey.

Another activity that can be classified within the narrow typology is the immigrants' involvement in social organizations like churches, alumni or community/town associations.[182] Although several alumni and town/community associations exist in the Diaspora,[183] there was no evidence of the informants' involvement in these organizations in either their interviews or in the participation observation that was conducted. This lack of evidence may be a result of this study's particular research focus on immigrants and religious organizations. In regards to the immigrants' involvement in religious organizations, this will be discussed in the section examining the transnational activities of Pentecostal churches.[184]

The broad transnational activities in which the informants were engaged included: visiting the home context, and finding spouses. One common feature noted among many of the informants was visits to their country of origin. The reasons for these visits are varied and included: vacation, weddings, funerals, finding a spouse, and family reunion. It is necessary to note that for many of the informants there was some level of overlap among their reasons for returning to their home country – thus a vacation could also include a family reunion, a wedding or funeral. For two informants however, the primary reason for returning home was to find a spouse. For many West Indians although there may be some 'pressure' to marry 'well' or within a certain ethnic group,[185] the final decision is ultimately that of the two parties involved. Within the West Indian migration discourse, the practice of returning to the homeland to find a spouse has some precedence. However, in these instances the individuals involved would normally have some prior relationship or friendship before one of them migrated. This does not seem to be the case for the two informants. One informant, a 37 year resident in Britain returned

[182] Itzigsohn t al, 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 330-331

[183] Alunmi associations: http://www.ajaacanada.com/about_us/index.html, and http://www.holmwooduk.com/law.html, accessed July 23, 2008.

[184] Refer to pages 105 – 107 of this chapter.

[185] This is seen in the parent's desire to see their children get married to people from a good background – i.e. upstanding members of the society (not a criminal), and who are gainfully employed. Within some families this desire to marry well may also be linked to colour, thus highlighting an aspect of the West Indian historical social system where colour was linked to economic success within the society. Within some East Indian families, marrying well is equated to marrying someone from within the East Indian Ethnic group. Godfrey St. Bernard, 'Ethnicity and Attitudes Towards Inter-Racial Marriages in Trinidad and Tobago – An Exploration of Preliminary Findings' in *Caribbean Quarterly* 40, no. 3&4 (1994):109-124.

to his district[186] in Jamaica to find a second wife after becoming a widower. From his interview and subsequent conversations with both him and his wife, it was determined that although they knew of each other, there was no evidence of them having any prior relationship or friendship prior to their marriage. In regards to the second informant, she is the second wife of a widower who has spent some period of time living in New York. Here too there does not seem to be any prior relationship between them. When discussing her marriage this informant noted: "he is from my district so he knew me. […] He was married, his wife died, so he visited and after I came here he [got] married to me".[187] In examining the profiles of the wives, it was noted that both were single Christian women in their late forties to early fifties and both were committed members of the Pentecostal churches within their districts.[188] The presence of this type of marital practice raises certain questions. Why was it important for the widowers to travel back to their respective districts in order to find wives? What were some of the characteristics found in these women that made them suitable as marriage partners? Some possible answers to these questions will be discussed in chapter 4 of this thesis.

Cultural activities

For many West Indian immigrants, it is the cultural transnational activities that have the most prominent positions in their lives. These activities can also be categorized as narrow and broad. Narrow cultural transnational activities can be defined as those "practices and institutions [in which the immigrants are involved that facilitate] the formation of meanings, identities and values".[189] Through these practices and institutions, West Indians are able to define what it means to be West Indian in the host nation context. Within the familial context, this definition took the form of parents ensuring that their children and grandchildren were not only familiar with their West Indian culture but also cognizant of their roots. This cultural translation was accomplished in various ways. In regards to food, although American and British food

[186] This is synonymous to a town or a small community.

[187] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[188] From my conversations with both women, they were very 'traditional' in their beliefs about dress, modesty and adornment. This was exemplified by them wearing hats to the church services, the modesty of their apparel, having unprocessed hair and wearing very little jewelry – the exception was their wedding rings and a watch.

[189] Itzigsohn et al., 'Mapping Dominican transnationalism,' 332.

may be eaten in the home, the principal place is given to food from the country of origin. Intricately associated to the familial diet is the West Indian ideology about the value of food[190] - i.e. the food with which one is provided should be received with gratitude and none of it should be wasted. A second generation female highlights this ideology in the following manner:

> My grandma …on a Sunday she gonna dish out your food and you better eat everything. [There] was a morning that my cousin didn't eat. He threw [the] food in the garbage and lied and said that oh he ate it. He got beaten. … When she [the grandmother] was younger there used to be times when she could only have a cup of tea or something like that and they don't want it to be like that for us.[191]

Within the home, some children and grandchildren are reared in a similar manner to the way in which their parents and grandparents were brought up in their home countries. They are taught to be respectful to others especially their elders, to be obedient, and to value education. As the excerpt above indicates this may also include punishing the child or grandchild when they behave in manner deemed to be reprehensible by the adults. However it should be noted that for some of the informants, the differences between the home and host context necessitated some modification in the way in which they parented their children. One informant from London describes her experience with her children in the following manner:

> We don't steal away their culture here from them, but … [at] the same time we let them know where their parents are coming from and what our culture is. And try to get them involved as much as we can in our culture as well [be]cause they like to come to Jamaica. … I think that's very important for kids, very important [that you] don't take away the parents' culture, your culture from them but [get] them used to both cultures. I think that's good.[192]

Indelibly linked with the transference of West Indian cultural and behavioural practices is the need for children and grandchildren to know their roots and have a place of belonging. Given the racial dynamics in both the US and UK, and the manner in which they affect the lives of West Indian immigrants, including the informants, having a

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[190] It should be noted that this ideology is not limited to the West Indian culture but has parallels in other cultures, ex. African, Latin American, American etc. One primary reason for the prominence of this ideology among some West Indian immigrants was the lack of provisions while they were living in the islands.

[191] Group interview, second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 11, 2007.

[192] First generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

place to which one can be linked is essential for the second and later generations of immigrants. During an interview with an informant in New York, she narrated that one of her dreams had been to take her two grandsons to Jamaica so that they could see not only where she came from but also where their great grand parents had lived and worked. This dream was realised in 2006. According to the informant, her primary reason for financing this trip was that her grandsons would know their roots. This informant's opinion about the importance of having and knowing roots was expressed as follows:

> … I think part of the reason why we're having such a problem with our young Black youths is because of the fatherlessness in the home and I believe that young men needs to know their roots. I'm not saying it's not important for a woman but more so for a man because otherwise he's just out there. Where did I come from? Where am I going? You know, they don't have any thing to anchor on to.[193]

For many West Indian Christians, religious training also plays a pivotal role in the manner in which they rear their children. According to one informant an important duty for her as a parent was "taking [her] children to church not just sending them, bringing them up in Sunday school, teaching them about God and things like that, and how to value human life, [and] things like that".[194]

Broad transnational activities cover a wide range of activities that would constitute a person as 'being West Indian' though that individual may not have any direct link with the West Indian islands. Activities categorized in this framework would be those involving second or third generation immigrants who have had very limited contact with the islands and whose construction of a loosely affiliated West Indian identity is accomplished through periodically eating the food, listening to Reggae or Soca music, and trying to retain the language, i.e. the dialects, pronunciation and/or vocabulary of the islands. Included in the broad typologies are also the ways in which West Indian descendants have taken certain cultural markers and recreated them to form an entirely new entity within the new home context. One example of such re-creation found in both the U.S. and Britain, is the adoption of dreadlocks, a visible marker that an individual is a Rastafari, as an expression of identity, pride and fashion within the larger Black community.

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[193] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2008.

[194] First generation female, a former Brooklyn resident now living in Florida, dated April 13, 2008.

Transnational activities among Pentecostal churches

Having discussed the various transnational activities in which the West Indian immigrants are engaged, it is also important to investigate the kinds of transnational activities in which the religious communities which they attend are involved. One common transnational feature noted in all three congregations was the sending of money to the Caribbean. This activity took three particular forms: financial assistance to specific individuals, contributions to a church and community projects; or some disaster relief programme. The first two forms were conducted on an ongoing basis while the latter was engaged in only during an emergency. It should be noted that this activity was normally brokered through former members of the churches who had relocated to the Caribbean[195] or though the church's position as the headquarters of the ministry – as is the case for Miracle Temple.

Another transnational feature noted specifically within the New York context was the expansion of some Diaspora churches beyond their immediate context to other contexts, particularly back to the country of origin. Speaking of African Diaspora churches Afe Adogame notes that this expansion "demonstrates a kind of 'spiritual remittance mechanism".[196] This feature was evident in Miracle Temple Ministries, which has 8 branches in three countries – The United States, Canada and Jamaica. As the headquarters, Miracle Temple Ministries – Brooklyn, functions as a key resource for financial and personnel assistance for the other branches. The transnational links between the headquarters and the branches are reinforced in several ways. First, through the church's Sunday bulletin in which was listed the names and minister/pastors of all branches along with the names of members who needed prayer due to illness, or some other circumstance. Second, these transnational links are further strengthened through the financial contribution and the founder's frequent visitations to the church branches, as well as his continuous involvement in the ministry of these churches. Third, the local and global dynamics that may constitute the ministry of the church – in that programmes which are normally organized on the local level may also have global links with the other

[195] By maintaining contact with their former members these churches are kept updated on the developments at home or in other contexts. For Miracle Temple in particular, the relocation of members have provided the necessary personnel needed to start branches in other locations.

[196] Afe Adogame, 'Up, Up Jesus! Down, Down, Satan!' 326.

churches.[197] Another area in which the local/global dynamic may also be demonstrated is in church membership, i.e. membership can be conceptualized in terms of the local church but also in terms of the international organization as well.

For Flatlands, and Willesden the expansion dynamic noted above does not exist. For these two churches, their transnational links with the West Indies are more tenuous. In the case of Flatlands, no formal organizational link was observed between this congregation and the NTCG denomination in the West Indies. What was noted, were the differences between the church's official name and what it was called by some of the members. Officially the church is Flatlands Church of God; however amongst some of the members it is called Flatlands NTCG. It is in this designation that one finds the link to the West Indies. When the Church of God denomination sought to register the church in Jamaica following its organization in 1925, there was already a denomination bearing the name Church of God.[198] Therefore they took the name New Testament Church of God. The existence of this 'unofficial' designation attests to the presence of some kind of 'link' that is perpetuated both in the minds and lives of its members. For Willesden NTCG, the most prominent links with the West Indies or other contexts were brokered through the activities of their individual members. On a denominational level, it was noted that although the NTCG in Britain bears the same name as its counterpart in the West Indies it does not seem to have much contact with that denomination. As a denomination, NTCG in Britain is affiliated with the Church of God denomination in Cleveland, U.S. The prominence of this link was seen in the presence of several NTCG national executive council members at a Church of God conference in the U.S. and that of Church of God leadership during the NTCG annual convention in Britain. Associated with the U.S. - Britain link is the participation of American preachers like Bishop Noel Jones and Bishop T.D. Jakes in the NTCG annual convention.[199] Another distinct link noted on the denominational level was their interaction with various African and Indian

[197] This could include the exchange of preachers, invitations, and letter of greeting between the branches. While conducting fieldwork, the minister in charge of the May Pen branch in Jamaica died. In preparation for her funeral, a special offering was collected to aid with the financial requirements. Condolences and well wishes were sent to the members of the May Pen branch through Bishop Stewart who was going to Jamaica to officiate at the funeral.

[198] See NTCG Jamaican and Cayman Islands website: http://ntcgjaci.org/history.htm, accessed July 20, 2007.

[199] This convention is also called the NTCG Big Move convention.

leaders – in the form of having them as the main speakers at the Big Move annual convention.[200]

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that when examining immigrants and the immigrant faith communities in which they participate, one has to allow for a diversity of perspectives. For although these topics have at times been presented as simple straight forward issues, the reality is that they comprise several converging elements. It is in this manner that many empirical studies that have been conducted on West Indian migration are problematic. With their overwhelming dependence upon the push-pull model, they have failed to take into consideration the other factors that have and continue to influence the migratory process of many West Indians. In the area of economics, space needs to be given to scrutinizing the West Indian Islands' economic past, because it is here that the foundations of the Islands' present economies were laid and the contemporary 'safety valve' features are explained. In conducting this investigation however, specific attention also needs to be given to the manner in which the proliferation of certain relationships[201] between the West Indian Islands and the metropoles facilitated the migration process. Finally a critical investigation of the individual, the family and 'image' is essential. For many migrants, it is the family that makes their migration a possibility, i.e. by providing the much required money for traveling, the emotional support, and the care for children who may be left behind. The image is also significant because it forms the basis by which people in the West Indies are socialized in relation to their ongoing migratory culture. Thus it is only in examining all of these factors that one can give adequate attention to why immigrants choose to migrate.

When discussing how West Indian migrants interact with their new host countries, a multi-dimensional approach is also necessary. For the West Indians who came to Britain beginning in 1948 and to the U.S. in 1965 onwards, it was their racial encounter in their largely disadvantaged urban communities that would lay the foundation for their

[200] Two of the main speakers for the 2008 Big Move convention were Pastor Agu Irukwu, the head of the Redeemed Christian Church of God executive council in UK and Dr. Paul Dhinakaran, a prominent Indian Christian leader.

[201] As indicated throughout this chapter, many of these relationships were biased, favouring the interest of the United States and Britain as opposed to what would be most beneficial to the Islands.

future interactions. Although West Indians had arrived in Britain as citizens, they found themselves as the object of a racial system whose goal was to relegate them to one of the most oppressed ethnic groups within the society. In the U.S., West Indian migrants encountered a society that was still involved in certain racial activities against several minority groups. This was particularly the case in regards to many of the African Americans among whom they resided. Within these contexts marked by discrimination and racism, West Indians utilized their ethnic and religious resources to create spaces of belonging, empowerment, and the creation of social and cultural capital. One such space was the immigrant faith community. Within this community, the immigrants were able to find many of the resources that enabled them to navigate the terrains of the Diaspora. Coinciding with this process was the forging of multiple ties between their home and the host contexts, which allowed the migrants to simultaneously inhabit both worlds. Within these multiple worlds, they were able to use the culture, heritage and ways of home as a template for adapting to the new context. As a result, many migrants discovered a voice which allowed them to articulate just what it meant for them to be West Indian in a foreign land.

Chapter four: Finding space

Identification among first generation immigrants

I am a Jamerican[1] *which means a Jamaican American. … I came here from Jamaica at the age of fifteen. … [I'm] like fifty now, just to tell you how many years I've been here, like 35 years, right. So I love Jamaica. That's where I was born but I've gone to school here and you know meeting my husband here, [and] having my kids you know and becoming an American citizen. So now I consider myself a Jamerican.*

First generation female, living in US for 35 years[2]

Introduction

The question of identity is of profound importance within human societies. It is an essential element in the lives of all people - one that is rooted in the history of an individual or a group. However, although identity is shaped by the experiences of the past, it also enables a person to live in the present and move into the future. Thus, "identities are in transition, involved in a multiplicity of crossovers and mixes".[3] As Stuart Hall states, "identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions".[4] Identity therefore, is not static but fluid. It provides a source of significance, meaning and experience for both the collective group and the individual. Identity also allows you to articulate how you see yourself in relation to the other – both the real and the imagined - which in turn enables an individual to

[1] This slang term is the conjunction of Jamaican and American. It describes an identity resulting from the amalgamation of Jamaican and American elements. This term, first coined and popularised by 'Born Jamericans', a Brooklyn based rap group, was used to signify their Jamaican parentage and their American birth and upbringing. In recent years it has evolved to encompass several delineations of Jamaican and American combinations – including like our informant – someone who was born and raised in Jamaican but came to the U.S. as a teenager. Within the American context, Jamerican has become a term that signifies an 'American distinction rooted in Jamaican pride and culture'. Urban Dictionary, See website: http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=jamerican accessed July 28, 2008.

[2] This informant has recently moved from Brooklyn to Florida.

[3] Marie Gillespie, *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change* (London: Routledge, 1995), 19.

[4] Stuart Hall, 'Introduction: Who needs 'Identity'?' in Stuart Hall, and Paul Du Gay, eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 4.

construct their concept of self and the other.[5] It is necessary to note that it is only in the process of internalization and the construction of meaning around this internalization that identity becomes identity.[6] With this construction and internalization results the legitimization of boundaries – which are then articulated though various cognitive and performative actions directed towards oneself and the other.

For the first generation immigrants however, the construction and the internalization processes whereby boundaries are legitimized and identities are articulated occur within a migration framework. Thus, it is their myriads of connections linking their localities of origin with those to which they migrate that helps them to forge a nexus from which emerges their 'new' concept of the self and the other.[7] For some migrants, the migration framework also consists of a religious dimension – one which may serve to anchor them to their country of origin while also enabling them to interact with their host country. Given both the prominence and the politics of migration within the current global landscape, an investigation into the re-negotiation of identities among first generation migrants within a religious arena is highly warranted.

In this chapter, the analysis of identities exhibited by first generation West Indian immigrants will be conducted within the context of their involvement in immigrant Pentecostal churches. In this chapter, I will argue that because the Pentecostal churches are themselves located within the migration framework, they provide us with a suitable environment for investigating how ethnic and religious identities are being re-negotiated/maintained by first generation West Indian immigrants in the Diaspora. This chapter will address two primary areas of study. First it will investigate the types of ethnic and religious identities being re-negotiated/maintained within this particular religious context as a result of certain transnational ties and the immigrants' interaction with the new host societies.

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[5] Eleanor Nesbitt, 'I'm a Gujarati Lohana and a Vaishnav as Well,' in Simon Coleman, and Peter Collins, eds., *Religion, Identity and Change: Perspectives on Global Transformations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 174.

[6] Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity,* 7.

[7] It bears noting that although various scholars have noted the presence of these networks in the lives of migrants, very little space was given to their investigation since the focus was upon how the migrant family would assimilate into the new context. In recent years, much attention has been given to examining the transnational networks and the impact they have on the lives of the migrants.

Finally, the second area of study will document some of the ways in which these identities are being demonstrated within the immigrant Pentecostal arena.

Re-negotiation/maintenance of identities

As a result of their engagement within the migration framework, West Indian Pentecostals have become intricately connected to multiple contexts – the home, the host, and other contexts. The formation and expansion of these connections allows the immigrants to not only engage in various socio-political, economic, and religious activities, but they also function as a seminal element in their re-construction of the 'self' and the 'other'. For as they interact with the host contexts, these connections also allow for the transference and re-articulation of concepts that enable them to re-negotiate their identities. What identities are being re-negotiated by these first generation West Indian immigrants? Within our examination of this question specific attention will be given to the role that the Pentecostal churches, which are themselves products and facilitators of these connective ties, play in the re-negotiation of identities among their membership.

Ethnically, the majority of the informants in New York City described themselves within Black/West Indian oriented rhetoric. For two informants this was not the case as they ascribed to a nationalistic or hyphenated identity. These were expressed as: Jamaican, and Jamerican. The informant, who describes herself as Jamaican is a relatively recent immigrant, having immigrated to the United States in June 2001. For her, Jamaica is still very much her home. According to her the primary reason for her being in the United States is because of her husband since "he's the one who filed for me to live here". When asked if she would consider going back to Jamaica if the circumstances made such a move possible she replied:

> For right now I can't really give you a straightforward argument but I'm always considering Jamaica. I love Jamaica. I rather live in Jamaica than here but for right now, [laugh] I say I wouldn't definitely say I want to go back [immediately] you know, [the] experience is good and being here is a different experience from back home and I can always go back you know, we adjust.[8]

[8] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007

In contrast, although the informant who describes herself as Jamerican has resided in the United States for 35 years Jamaica still plays a pivotal role in her re-negotiation of identity. She stated: "I love Jamaica. That's where I was born but I've gone to school here and you know meeting my husband here, [and] having my kids, you know and becoming an American citizen. So now I consider myself a Jamerican". Rooted in the hyphenated Jamerican identity are particular Jamaican features that allow her to distinguish herself from other American citizens while simultaneously acknowledging the ways in which she has 'become' American. One area in which this negotiation of a identity was expressed was in parenting her children. She states:

> Okay I started out with trying to bring my kids up the way I was brought out but then I realize that it didn't, it didn't, most of it didn't work here, not because that I didn't want to continue with it but because of the, maybe even the government, or the school system or even the state system it makes a big difference now in the way we try to raise our kids 'cause you know in Jamaica we've got a different way you know, but I still, I still try to maintain a little bit of the Jamaican upbringing in them, not a little bit a lot of it [9]

For many informants however, the negotiating of an ethnic identity – expressed in a Black/West Indian, nationalistic or hyphenated manner - seeks to achieve two purposes. One, to call attention to the presence of a group that has historically suffered from double invisibility within the U.S. national context – as blacks and as black foreigners.[10] Two, to highlight the diversity that exists within the commonly perceived homogenous Black America – especially the distinction that they perceive as existing between themselves and African Americans. Rooted in the rhetoric of distinction is the idea of West Indians as 'good blacks' or 'model migrants' who will

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[9] First generation female who is now living in Florida, dated April 13, 2007

[10] Roy Simon Bryce-Laporte, 'Black Immigrants: The Experience of Invisibility and Inequality' *Journal of Black Studies* 3, no. 1 (September 1972): 31. This invisibility is also evident in the manner in which census statistics are complied in the US. Thus Flatbush (zip code 11226), an area that is predominantly West Indian is listed as having a 79% Black/African American population. See US Census Bureau fact sheet for zip code 11226 at the website: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFFacts?_event=Search&geo_id=86000US11234&_geoContext=01000US%7C86000US11234&_street=&_county=&_cityTown=&_state=&_zip=11226&_lang=en&_sse=on&ActiveGeoDiv=geoSelect&_useEV=&pctxt=fph&pgsl=860&_submenuId=factsheet_1&ds_name=DEC_2000_SAFF&_ci_nbr=null&qr_name=null&reg=null%3Anull&_keyword=&_industry=., Accessed July 28, 2008. Although the contemporary academic discourse on migration is primarily focused on Mexican/Chicano/Hispanic and Asian immigrants, some analyses have focused on the lives of West Indian immigrants. These include: Mary Waters, *Black Identities*; Nancy Foner, ed., *New Immigrants in New York*; Constance R. Sutton and Elsa M. Chaney eds., *Caribbean Life in New York City*; Philip Kasinitz, *Caribbean New York: Black Immigrants and the Politics of Race* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); and Milton Vickerman, *Crosscurrents: West Indian Immigrants and Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

achieve the American Dream.[11] What is interesting to note is that this stereotype is not only attributed to West Indians by the wider society[12] but is widely accepted and reinforced by West Indians themselves. Among my informants, there is a strong emphasis on hard work, education and being upstanding members of the society. One male informant articulates these ideals in the following manner:

> I say to the young folks …"do [the] right that [you] can do". "Try and get an education and it turn into a good job". That's a very good thing in this country, not in this country alone but all over the world, education is a very good thing. When you have that you can choose and you can refuse and get the right package. [I] mean that you can make a lot of money, if you have the right education and you can get a good job and you can take care of your family and just follow through. Everyone wants to have a good job, so that my real point.[13]

Although several scholars have documented some West Indian immigrants boldly stating that there are distinct differences between themselves and African Americans[14], this was not noted among my informants. What was observed from both the interviews and the ethnographic study was a more subtle articulation of that difference. This was expressed in several ways. Within the church services at Miracle Temple and Flatlands, there is a strong emphasis placed on West Indian culture – the songs used, the organizational structure followed, and the language that is spoken – a mixture of English and Jamaican patois. For one informant, this distinction was stated in her assessment of her two grandsons. The oldest whom she ascribes as having a more West Indian identity is "on the honour roll, well behaved and loves the Lord, all that good stuff. … [He got] saved at eight [years old] … and he's just that steadfast in the Lord". Her other grandson in contrast is perceived to be more American and is more of a challenge. Not only is he 10 ½ years old and not saved, but she stated that "you could tell him 'if you don't have Jesus you going to hell'. It don't mean nothing to him". From her interview it seems that this grandson is probably having trouble in school. She states that "it's murder to get him to read".

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[11] For many West Indians and members of the wider society, reinforcement of this portrayal is found in the 'much-touted successes of prominent blacks of Caribbean ancestry, such as Colin Powell, and Kenneth Clark' See Reuel R. Rogers, *Afro-Caribbean Immigrants and the Politics of Incorporation,* 51. It should be noted however that these stereotypes are not new but are also applied to the earlier wave of West Indian migrants. See Ira Reid, *The Negro Immigrant*.

[12] This stereotype is also very prominent among many white employers. See Mary Waters, *Black Identities,* 118 – 123; Philip Kasinitz, *Caribbean New York.*

[13] First generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[14] See Mary Waters, *Black Identities;* Philip Kasinitz, *Caribbean New York.*

Thus she is planning on sending him to the Sylvan Learning Center[15] because she "can't afford for him to go down the drain.[16] [She states emphatically] *I mean it's just not, not going to happen in the name of Jesus*".[17] Therefore, although she perceived her grandson as 'African American' in several ways, for her, his success and position in the society was non-negotiable. This became a goal to which she gave her time and money to achieve.

In discussing the Black/West Indian ethnic identities being re-negotiated by first generation West Indian immigrants in New York, it is necessary to note that at a deeper level some national identities are also being maintained. As a result, two primary ethnic identities can be articulated, with each having precedence at different levels. Thus, when relating to the wider society, a collective Black/West Indian identity may be expressed.[18] However within the West Indian community, certain national identities may come to the fore.[19] One informant, who is married to a Bajan,[20] described her perceived distinctions between Jamaicans and Barbadians in the following manner:

> God help[ed] us that during the interim shortly after we were married in 1974 about three years or so, my daughter was about two, we purchase[d] our own home. We have that in Jamaica so it was not a big deal for me. But no offence to Bajans but they just didn't have that standard of living back then. Now it's a different scenario.[21]

The presence of different national identities was also noted within the churches, especially Miracle Temple. These included: Vincentian, Barbadian, Trinidadian, Jamaican etc. Demographically, however Jamaicans constitute the majority of the members in both Miracle Temple and Flatlands. This demographic slant has its problems because as the major national identity, the Jamaican identity tends to

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[15] The Sylvan Learning Center is a tutoring service that assists students to catch up, keep up and get ahead in their school work. See website: http://tutoring.sylvanlearning.com/, accessed July 29, 2008.

[16] The coupling of lack of education with going down the drain highlights a significant West Indian cultural trait. Within West Indian societies, education is seen as the door that allows an individual access to economic and social mobility.

[17] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007. Italicization is mine.

[18] This is especially the case in regards to political representation.

[19] See Mary Waters' documentation about the manner in which various national groups perceive each other. Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 58 – 60.

[20] This is popular regional term used to refer to people from Barbados. The official term is Barbadian.

[21] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007.

dominate the others to the extent that the churches were perceived as 'Jamaican' churches. Within such a context, articulating another regional identity may be difficult. One Vincentian, expressed this tension in the following manner:

> I feel that a lot of the focus is on Jamaica rather than many countries. … It is a big step right now that they're going to St. Vincent [on short-term mission trips]. … They usually have an annual Vincentian cultural [show] where they try to raise money for benefits to help in aid and medical supply in St. Vincent. A lot of people had complained that, why not [have] a Jamaican cultural show or something like that. And I'm feeling like, okay everywhere I go, I already know so much about the Jamaican culture, the food is always Jamaican food. I know how they speak, I know their music, even the bad. So it's just because … they want to be involved in everything.[22]

According to this informant, it is this dynamic that contributes to the formation of dominant national identity churches – Barbadian, Guyanese, Trinidadian, Jamaican etc. Basically "people tend to go where they feel that their culture is usually more played out".[23]

Having examined some ways in which first generation West Indian immigrants are re-negotiating and maintaining their ethnic identities,[24] we will now investigate what types of religious identities are being perpetuated within the Pentecostal churches. The most prominent religious identity noted among the respondents is that of the committed believer in Jesus Christ or the 'saint'.[25] This identification, which has strong pietistic undertones, is linked to a strict moral lifestyle, dependence on God in all aspects on their lives, some levels of conservatism, minimal engagement in political and social activities, and a high involvement in church activities. For the informants, their relationship with Jesus Christ is central element in their lives. As a result, their identity, who they perceive themselves to be and who they desire others to perceive them to be, is tied to being a

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[22] 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007.

[23] Ibid.

[24] The identities of the second and third generation will be discussed in chapter 5.

[25] Within some Pentecostal circles, this identity is a product of several acts of 'Grace' - salvation, sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Following an individual's decision to accept Jesus as saviour – getting saved or born again, that individual is expected to live a life that is holy and set apart unto God. It is within the context that that person will experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit and thus be equipped for service to the world. During a sermon about prayer at a midweek service, a minister at Miracle Temple said: '[God] wants to see our hearts transformed into a house of purity. [A] house purified and cleansed now [is] a house of healing, deliverance. [The] church [can be] to the world what a hospital is to sick people'. Thursday Night service dated March 29, 2007.

believer in Jesus Christ. Thus, for them it is extremely important to live in a 'holy' manner that would please God. One informant articulates this as such:

> It is important to me personally, that I live and let the light shine as the word says. And somebody might wonder, what is the light? Somebody sees something that is different in you. There's something that is outstanding, there's something that somebody will always be able to see and that is what is important. Because people don't necessarily always want to hear you talk about God … but even if they don't want to hear, if they can really look at you and say well she's talking about God and the way I see her act and what she does, no, how she dresses and things like these should be able to say, Yeah! There is something different. …Well that's just it with me. I just trust God and pray and asked him to help me that I would live that life that will represent him.[26]

For some informants, their dedication to pursuing and living a life that pleases God results in various blessings in their lives.[27] According to one informant:

> We have a very faithful lot of folks. We see a lot of miracles right here. God has healed, [people who were] sick, [who had] stroke, [and] cancer. God has blessed his people tremendously. A lot of people [who] didn't [own] no homes, bought their first, God has blessed them with homes. When I came here there wasn't that much cars, so everybody have cars now, a lot of people. God has been good, tremendous good. Turns out you can say that God has been good to his people.[28]

The conservatism within the churches finds its most notable expressions in matters of dress and in area of leadership. In regards to clothes, both genders are expected to dress in a modest manner.[29] For the first generation men this means wearing a suit and tie to every service. For the women, this is equated to wearing a dress or a blouse and a skirt. For many first generation women this also includes wearing a hat or prayer shawl as well. During my fieldwork, it was observed that there was some distinction in attire of the different generations. The majority of first generation women in both Flatlands and Miracle Temple wore hats and long dresses or skirts, while the men wore suits and ties.[30] It should be noted that these articles of

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[26] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[27] This idea has strong biblical precedence where obedience and commitment to God was seen as the prerequisite to the coming of blessings in the lives if adherents. Alternately, disobedience and lack of committed resulted in bad things overtaking the adherents. See Deut.: 28, 29.

[28] First generation male in Brookyln, dated April 22, 2007.

[29] Similar ideas were also expressed in the gospel tract 'The Christian manner of dress,' which was distributed at Miracle Temple by a first generation female member in her sixties on March 29, 2007

[30] These dresses or skirts would be several inches below the knee. For the men, they had short well groomed haircuts.

clothing were simultaneously conservative in appearance as well as formal.[31] Among the immigrant children, there was the tendency to dress in a style that would be considered casual – shirt and tie for young men, and a dress, or a blouse and a skirt[32] for the young women. In Flatlands, most of the young women attended church with their heads uncovered. At Miracle Temple in contrast, there was a mixture, with most young women wearing a prayer shawl[33] and a minority having no head covering. Although the discussion concerning dress was a key issue of reflection and evaluation especially in regards to the second and third generation in both churches, it was more vocalized within Miracle Temple. According to one informant, Miracle Temple was a place where they "believe in holiness". Therefore the issue of dress is highly important she states:

> Over the years I've been here,… the standard of you say our adorning and the spirituality [has dropped]. You see a paradigm shift you know. No matter how you say [it], this is what the manual you know according to the scriptures say. It's still very lax and you know it's like oh well the anointing is over there and that person didn't have to do that so why do we have to do that, you know. We can get the anointing without wearing our hat or [by wearing] jewellery or [by not doing] certain little things that were real when I came here 30 plus years ago. I'm all for change but change for the better you know. I hate to know that something is going down, up yes, not down.[34]

Later in her interview she states that overall they have a fine bunch of young people. She acknowledges that "they are not gonna be like us, they gonna do things differently but the main thing is to prepare faith [and] that's all I want, I mean that's the bottom line. I want to know that when I go to heaven they're there that's all".[35] Faith is presented here in an epistemological manner - seeking out knowledge. It is something that is learned and then expressed in ones' lifestyle. This preparation in terms of faith is accomplished in several ways, namely: through the teaching given in

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[31] In this manner their dress can be seen as the perpetuation of the West Indian ideology of wearing one's best clothes to church.

[32] Although the young women wear dresses and skirts, the length is normally at the knee or a little above. This is in sharp contrast to the most of the first generation women whose dress would be several inches below the knee. In most cases this distinction was due to the generation. However, although in the minority, there were some first generation young women whose attire was similar to that of the other young women.

[33] The prayer shawl is a small circular piece of lace that is worn on one's head during church services.

[34] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007.

[35] Ibid.

Sunday school and Youth Group; preparing them for Baptism; and developing mentoring relationships with the young people. This is facilitated by the development of the concept of spiritual mother and father.[36] Within this capacity, some of the first generation men and women became models of masculinity and femininity, and the 'Christian' lifestyle for the children and youth within the churches. The interesting development that needs to be noted about this relationship is that on many levels, the information transferred from the mentors to the young people re-affirmed what was being taught by their parents.[37]

For some first generation women one feature of their religious identities was being a church leader. However, within this area a dichotomy existed in both churches. Although women were in leadership, and even in some areas that would be considered to be key positions, the traditional male leadership roles were perpetuated. In Flatlands, women function as: co-leader of the youth group, president of both the women's and evangelism ministries, Minister of music, Sunday school teacher, licensed minister,[38] secretary and church treasurer. Coupled with these leadership positions various women in the church have been chosen to moderate and to preach at various Church services. However, none of these women can become the senior minister/bishop of a church. As a result, no women can hold any of the top positions in the denomination – which is the level where important decisions are made. In terms of the ministry, the highest position for a woman is that of a licensed minister. In Flatlands, this position is occupied by the senior minister's wife, who is also the co-founder of the church. One informant who was the women's ministry president for several years expresses the following sentiments about female leadership within the churches.

> I realize that like in the secular world, in the business world that [there are] some places a woman is only allowed to go so much. So it doesn't matter her educational background, her qualification, you're not allowed to or you not allowed to take on

[36] Biblical mandate for such a relationship is found in the scriptures that admonish the elders and older women to teach the young men and women the ways of the Lord. See Titus 2: 3 -5; Duet. 6: 6-7.

[37] This includes admonishing the young people to work hard, get a good education, and be committed in their service to the Lord.

[38] As a licensed minister, women are allowed to preach and officiate during the services. However, they are not allowed to administer communion or baptise members since these activities are performed by the ordained minister, who within the Church of God denomination can only be a man.

> certain roles. I think they call it the glass ceiling and I see some of that in the Pentecostal church as well.[39]

It is interesting to note that in Flatlands, leadership in the ministerial areas – church minister, director of music- are intricately linked to the concept of 'calling'.[40] Thus the women who occupy these positions do so because they are 'called'. It is this 'call' that is discerned and affirmed in the licensing procedure. This process includes: first being recommended by a local senior minister to the regional governing body; second successfully completing both the examinations and the oral defence about one's calling before a panel of senior ministers. In Flatlands, it is noteworthy that the two women who hold licenses are both related to the senior minister/bishop - his wife and daughter.

In Miracle Temple, women also hold various leadership positions. They are: missionaries; the executive secretary; president of the youth group and the women's ministry; choir directors; and leaders of the Sunday school. Although they occupy these positions that play a vital role in the church, they are noticeably absent from other key leadership positions. During my ethnographic fieldwork, it was noted that at the Sunday morning and mid week services only the men sat on the podium and preached.[41] Although women were allowed to moderate, this activity was more prominent during an evening service versus the Sunday morning service.[42] Thus within most Sunday morning services, visible female participation was focused on specific activities such as: singing, bible reading, ushering and giving the announcements. Within Miracle Temple's top leadership structure only one female is present - Sister Grace.[43] Officially she is both the executive secretary and a missionary. In her position as the executive secretary she is responsible for the majority of the official information that comes into and goes out of the ministry. In

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[39] First generation female who is now living in Florida, dated April 13, 2007.

[40] The individual is equipped by the Holy Spirit to accomplish certain tasks within the church.

[41] The exception to this would have being the women's and youth Sunday evening services where females played a more visible role.

[42] In the five months that I conducted ethnographic research, a woman moderated the Sunday morning services only once.

[43] Grace is a pseudonym used to preserve this individual's anonymity.

terms of their annual convention,[44] it is Sister Grace that 'finds' the theme. She describes this discerning process as follows:

> Since I became the Secretary I go to prayer and fasting [as] soon as the Christmas is over. And [I] start seeking the Lord as to what would he have us to do this year and what he wants to say to us. And it means hearing him, [getting] the scripture that he would have used to be the theme, and then to formulate a letter of invitation, and then to take it in to Bishop and you know meet his approval.[45]

As a missionary she has travelled to several other countries to initiate branches. She is involved in the pastoral care ministry and home and hospital visitation. To aid her in this ministry she has taken a chaplaincy course. Unofficially, she is the go-to person for information on housing, jobs, immigration[46] etc., she is an intercessor, one of the primary mothers in the church and a stalwart member whose words carries a lot of weight. In all of these capacities, Sister Grace exerts tremendous influence within the church. During my fieldwork it was Sister Grace who introduced me to the congregation and who 'allowed' me access to my informants within the church. When Sister Grace was asked about her position in the leadership of the church she replied with two significant statements. First, she views her positions within the church ministry in the context of her 'calling'. In this manner she is very similar to women holding key leadership positions in Flatlands. Second, because she is called by God to this ministry, she will not allow men to intimidate her. She expresses these statements in the following manner:

> Matthew 11:12 says, 'the kingdom of God suffers violence and the violent have to take it by force'. And I thank God that I'm not only a authoritative but I'm also a authoritarian and I'm aggressive. It wasn't always like that's 'cause when the Lord baptize me with the Holy Ghost I don't even think he know what was gonna happen with this one. … I give God all the honor, the glory, and the praise. But I refuse; I don't let anything intimidate me. It doesn't faze me.[47]

When the informants in London were asked about their ethnic identities they gave the following responses: Black/West Indian; Black/Caribbean; Black/African,

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[44] This is an annual program in which speakers are invited in to minister on a specific theme. According to Sister Grace, 'convention is not just coming together. It's coming together yes but reflecting on where we've been and where we're going. And not only that but there must be a theme, God is saying something to us'. See interview with first generation female in New York, dated April 3, 2007.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Sister Grace became licensed as a notary public to help members in some of these areas.

[47] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007

African and Barbadian. What was significant about these responses was that the majority of the informants ascribed to a hybrid identity expressed as a combination of Black and some other ethnic identity. This notion of 'Blackness' was developed in Britain in the 1960's in the context of British anti-Black racism and partly due to the influence of the Black power movement in the United States. According to Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, two major criteria were used to define this concept. "First there is the notion of Blacks as sharing a common origin and culture and all that implies, and secondly, the notion of Blacks as sharing a common experience of racism and all that implies".[48] As a result of sharing this commonality, Asians, West Indian and Africans were able to form a 'united' coalition in order to speak to the issues they were all facing. It is within this forum that the concept Black has taken on serious political undertones. Coupled with the notion of commonality is also the issue of empowerment. This is expressed in the idea that as Blacks they were able to not only speak with one voice but amongst themselves they could facilitate certain changes that will benefit their communities.[49] In embracing these identities, some of the first generation informants highlight the common features that they share with other minorities and the forum this provides in their interaction with the larger society[50]. However as the rest of their self identification reveals, this collective unity is embraced only on a certain level – i.e. in interaction with the larger society. Thus within the Black community, other ethnic identities may become more prominent.

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[48] Floya Anthias, and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Racialized boundaries : race, nation, gender, colour and class and the anti-racist struggle* (London: Routledge, 1993 [1992]), 142

[49] The harnessing of a collective voice and common experience to facilitate changes within the Black community was seen in the area of politics – the push to eradicate the 'stop and search' (sus) laws; the formation of organizations such as the Co-ordinating Committee Against Racial Discrimination and the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD); the introduction of race-relations policies that benefited the black communities. In education it was seen in the emergence and growth of the supplementary and Saturday school programme, and the continued fight for equality within the educational system. See: Ambalavaner Sivanandan, *A different hunger: Writings on black resistance* (London: Pluto, 1982); and Trevor Carter, *Shattering Illusions: West Indies in British Politics* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1986). Although their voice and presence is viewed by several scholars as being co-opted by the structural inequalities that mark the education and political systems, it still bears noting that the presence and voice of Blacks are resulting in some change albeit small within Britain. See: Roy Carr-Hill, and Harbajan Chadha-Boreham, 'Education' in Ashok Bhat, Roy Carr-Hill, and Sushel Ohri, eds., *Britain's Black Population: A New Perspective* (Aldershot: Gower, 1988), 148-170; Gus John, and Derek Humphry, *Because They're Black*, (Harmondworth: Penguin Books, 1972 [1971]), 119 – 133; and Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, classic ed., (London: Routledge, 2002, [Unwin Hyman, 1987]), 146-198.

[50] It bears noting that this collaboration is not limited to the political and educational arenas, it also find expression in the religious arena as well. During the recent annual Big Move convention, the NTCG, had several African ministers as their keynote speakers.

Among the informants, the majority subscribed to the West Indian and Caribbean identities. Two informants described themselves as African and one embraced a Barbadian ethnic identity. According to Joe Aldred, by continuing to identify a group of people, many of whom are British citizens, "after where they have come from without reference to where they are, is to keep them in a permanent state of non-belonging, as 'foreigners'".[51] While this statement may be true in terms of the wider society, it does not explain why these first generation informants still adhere to this ethnic identity. This continued adherence to the West Indian/Caribbean/African identities takes on significant implications when one notes that most of the informants have lived in Britain for over 30 years. The answers to this enquiry may lay in the response of one informant. She says: "my ethnic background … would be black. … Now I am also English, but it is [due to] my time of being here". Here the informants' acceptance of an 'English' identity only in terms of the length of her stay in Britain is noteworthy and calls us to interrogate what are some of the ideas that are associated with an English identity.

Historically the term English has being linked with a sense of national belonging that was constructed in terms of an Anglo-Saxon ethnic consciousness.[52] As a result it promoted an exclusive Englishness, one defined in terms of the concepts of blood, soil and territory. Thus England was perceived as a place for the English.[53] In the 1960's and 1970's this identity was characterized by its opposition to "immigration and asylum, and general insularity and defensiveness".[54] Thus for many minority communities, the term English, as it relates to identity, was one that was seeped in racial undertones – calling attention to those who truly belonged and those who didn't. For some of the first generation informants, continuing to ascribe to a West Indian/Caribbean/African ethnic identity allows them to root themselves in the culture and heritage of their homeland, a place where ethnically they are

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[51] Joe Aldred, *Respect,* 76.

[52] Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650 – 1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Among some immigrants, Scots, Irish etc., there is much discussion about the distinction between being British versus being English. This is because within the Anglo-Saxon ethnic construction, those who 'belonged' in England shared a certain common White heritage. As a result, those have a different heritage, i.e. Blacks, Irish, Scots, etc., were perceived as not belonging.

[53] Rt. Hon. David Blunkett MP, *A New England: An English identity within Britain.* Speech to the Institute for Public Policy Research, 14 March 2005, 6. See website: http://www.efdss.org/newengland.pdf, accessed July 30, 2008.

[54] Ibid.

celebrated and nurtured. It is necessary to note however, that although their ethnic identities connect them to their homeland; it is neither re-negotiated nor lived out within that particular context. Instead its manifestation is within the British context, a place that has historically been hostile towards them. It is in this regard that they have taken the features of their 'belongingness' – their heritage and culture and used it to carve out a space of belonging within the British context.[55]

Among the informants there were two that described themselves in a nationalistic/regional fashion- as African and Barbadian. What is significant about these two informants is not only the manner in which they articulated their ethnic identity, and the length of time they have resided within the London context but also their interaction with their home context. Mary, a Ghanaian immigrant describes herself in this manner:

> I usually say I am a child of God. …And apart from that I will say I am an African. …And they will go forward and say, "Where are you from? And I say, "I come from West Africa, [from] Ghana". …Then I'll say, "Ashanti". So they'll keep going on and on, and I will give the definite place where I, [where] my family comes from, where I was born.[56]

As the above quotation reveals, one's birth place or familial location, ethnic group, country and region can all play a significant role in the process of one's identification. In that, while each identity fashions another layer of relating and identifying, it also combines with the others to make Mary the person that she is. Despite the orientation of her identities in various degrees towards Africa, Mary did not seem to have much contact with those back in Ghana. There were two specific times in which Ghana was mentioned in her interview – when she spoke about her identification and her written correspondence with her mother about wanting to become a radical – i.e. a politician who would help her people. In contrast, Mary spoke at length about the discrimination that she has experienced while living the past 42 years in Britain from both Whites and Blacks. It is within this context that her African identities were re-negotiated and maintained. Mary says:

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[55] In this manner their identity re-negotiation should not be typecast within a purely 'reactive' framework. Instead it need to be perceived in a manner that acknowledges both the presence of the racism and discrimination that they experienced and the creative and instrumental ways they developed to thrive and live within such a context.

[56]Mary is a pseudonym used to preserve this individual's anonymity. First generation female in London, dated July 16, 2007. Mary was a trained nurse for many years and is now retired.

> I was moved to the nurse's home[57] … you encounter a lot of troubles from the sisters in the wards. … We have a lot of foreign people in the home and we were all together as a black people. We were together when you come to any difficulty, we help one another. I must say you know the sisters were rough to us as a foreigner, the foreigners because we didn't have anywhere to go. They thought we were more or less like a slave and some of these sisters were so naïve, they didn't know much about the blacks people especially … when they hear that we have a different dialect. Because you know when you come here you have an African accent and those who are born here got a different accents and that's why I never learned to change my accent because I wanted to be recognized as an African you know.[58]

Thus for Mary, the re-negotiation of her African identities allowed her to distinguish herself from the Blacks 'born' in Britain while simultaneously providing her with resources to live life in Britain. The desire to dissociate herself from the 'other' Blacks highlights some of the fission that exists within the Black community[59]. It is necessary to note that Mary's encounter with discrimination and racism fuelled a desire to become a radical and also on some level of anger with God for allowing her people to be robbed by the Whites. She expresses these sentiments as follows:

> When I see the things they rob us [of] because I come from a rich country where the resources are really in abundance. Then I came here and I saw that we are helping them to be [what] they are and we are poor. And anytime they speak, they speak against us you know they call us … uncivilized. … How can he [God] allow them to come and rob us? To make the nation as it is and we are poor and we are hungry. …To be honest I wanted to be radical. …I wanted to be a politician you know. …To do what I can do within that scope to help my people.[60]

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[57] A residential facility where the nurses lived.

[58] First generation female in London, dated July 16, 2007.

[59] This division is especially the case between Blacks of West Indian ancestry and those of African ancestry. For although they share a common ancestral origin, they may be perceived, both by themselves and others, as having different cultures, and histories and thus exist a separate groups. It is within this context that they compete for various social and economic advantages. In examining the friction that exists one must acknowledge the role that certain stereotypes about each group plays in the interaction amongst the groups. For some Africans, West Indians may be perceived as lowlifes who smoke marijuana, whereas to some West Indians, Africans may be seen as those who come and steal their jobs – getting the benefit without having to struggle like they did to get access to jobs in these areas. See some of the comments posted on the online forum site Topix. Website: http://www.topix.com/forum/afam/TL2O0IMGMO8M2JV5Q, accessed July 31, 2008. It bears noting that this dynamic is not limited to the Britain but is also present within the US context. See: Jennifer V. Jackson, and Mary E. Cothran, 'Black versus Black: The Relationships among African, African American, and African Caribbean Persons', *Journal of Black Studies* 33, no. 5 (May, 2003): 576-604. Despite these dynamics, there are some churches with Africans and West Indians members, albeit, one group is the majority and the other is present in small numbers.

[60] First generation female in London, dated July 16, 2007. These sentiments were also expressed in a letter that she wrote to her parents in Ghana.

Her reconciliation with God and strength to continue living in Britain came from her mother's reply to her letter. Her mother said, "Listen God is God. He has a way to do it, just leave everything as it is and carry on what you are doing".[61] It is this belief that has enabled her to face the realities of life in Britain.

Like Mary, June's identity is also oriented towards her homeland. June describes herself as: "I'm proudly Barbadian. Yeah I prefer to say that I'm Barbadian, from the West Indies".[62] Unlike Mary however, June has only lived in Britain for six years and is in constant contact with her family – especially her husband, who has been transferred back to Barbados. She states that the initial decision to come to Britain was very difficult not only because of her job but also because she would be leaving her family for the first time.[63] Her primary reason for coming was to join her husband who was transferred to London by his employer. For June, her residence in Britain is temporary. According to her: "my reason for staying here … [is] because I have a particular goal. And that goal is to study more and to be of benefit to especially young people in the sense of church".[64] Thus by maintaining a Barbadian identity, June continues to mark herself as the foreigner and a temporary resident in the wider British society while simultaneously remaining connected to the country to which she will return in the immediate future.

The religious identities expressed by the informants within the London context are primarily that of the 'saint', and the child of God.[65] The saint identity is constructed by a process of 'othering' – i.e. the saint versus the sinner. This re-negotiation of this identity within a growing secularized British context is especially significant for the informants. As various scholars have shown, West Indians arrived

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[61] Ibid.

[62] June is a pseudonym used to preserve this individual's anonymity. First generation female in London, dated July 19, 2007.

[63] The difficulty associated with this decision was seen in June's decision to delay her joining her husband fro two years. First generation female in London, dated July 19, 2007.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Another religious identity expressed by the informants was that of being a member of a Black-led or Black Majority Church. These identities gain prominent when informants were interacting with the wider society. This type of identification however is one that requires interrogation for as Gerrie ter Haar concludes in case of African in the Netherlands, the development of an alternate Christian identity as opposed to a universal one may serve the interests of Europeans rather than the immigrants. See. Gerrie ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe* (Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press, 1998), 83.

in Britain believing that they were coming to a Christian nation. Instead they found one that was increasingly secular and understated in its religiosity.[66] However as Davie notes, by the 1960's secularization was also prominent within the churches as well.[67] Faced with such a reality the immigrants drew upon on the 'saint' religious identity formulated within their homelands, and thus marked themselves as the 'religious other'.[68] During an interview an informant stated: "I got my background from home as a Christian. So I made it up in my mind [that] come what may when I come to this country nobody is gonna let me go apart, astray. And I held onto my integrity and never let anybody push me".[69] For many of the informants, the saint identity was communicated through the idea of 'looking like a Christian'. One informant reflecting on this belief states:

> "I have heard, and it was a pretty common thing to say you could look at the person and know that they're Christian. I don't know if it's quite possible. In the 1950's, early 60's to see a Christian [woman] wear a pants suit, trousers suit would be almost demeaning and they would say look at her, today that isn't an issue anymore. So the identity I'm talking about, … in the 1950's to see a lady in a female suit, you would feel that person [has gone] astray, today it is different.[70]

As this informant notes, although certain changes had taken place in terms of dress,[71] some people still feel that the traditional way of dressing is the 'right' and 'holy' way.

Another aspect of the 'saint' identity is a high level of involvement within the church. This involvement is conceptualized in the framework of being very

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[66] Grace Davie, *Religion In Britain since 1945: Believing without Belonging*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 37. See also: Michael Argyle, and Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, *The Social Psychology of Religion* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975).

[67] In the years following the Second World War (1945 – 60), the churches in Britain underwent a period of reconstruction during which efforts were focused on rebuilding the physical building, restoring the flagging attendance and participation and reviving the pre-war institutions. The most symbolic representation of this sense of restoration was the Coronation of Elizabeth II in June 1953. Although these efforts were moderate successful especially during the 1950's, they did not last. By the 1960's the churches were faced with a reality of becoming irrelevant within the society. In their pursuit to be relevant, 'to be in rather than out of step with the world', the churches adopted a series of reforms largely modelled after the secular world. Ibid., 30-34.

[68] Grace Davie sees this practice of retention of religious form and style as a form of their 'resisting the pressures to adapt to British ways of thought'. Ibid. p. 37.

[69] First generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

[70] First generation male in London, dated June 2007.

[71] See discussion on clothes in Chapter 5: Creating Space.

committed to the things of the Lord – which is expressed in the sacrifice of one's time, money and life in service to God. One informant describes this commitment as follows:

> These are the days when I pray and say, 'Lord, send the message for the hour that men and women will know that it's all about you'. It is not half in the world, half in the church. [Not] coming to the church and [not having] for the rest of the week that commitment, that connection to God, reading his word and praying. You've got to keep that in mind you know. There are people who are, you can see that they're committed but to me not fully, not half of the congregation as it were you know.[72]

What is noteworthy about these informants is the manner in which they worked to build Willesden Church and the NTCG denomination. Among the informants were several of Willesden's oldest members. One informant describes those days as:

> We used to worship in a hall on Greyhound road and then I was one of the few young people there and so was involved in a lot of things, Sunday School Secretary, youth choir every little thing that was going on I was involved in.[73]

Carol, another long standing Willesden member states:

> [We had] to rent halls and eventually we were in a Scout hall. And then the pastor [was] always look[ing] around and [he] saw this building going [for sale]. … The members, we used to have to give our 50 pence, and £5 and £10. … It was in a state and the members and the brethren, the different trades, the carpenters, the painter and everybody and the ladies come every evening and cleanup and everybody you know play their part.[74]

Among the other informants was a minister who was instrumental in the inception of several NTCG churches in the Midlands. He relates this experience as follows:

> Although I used to help others but in Coventry I was the chairman for the team, that evangelized Coventry. So we would leave Birmingham where we lived and travel down in a car and we go from house to house, we see a door over there and we actually targeted black people. … And then you try and get … children for Sunday school then as soon as possible get a little school hall. And people would pay money for the little hall, sometimes out of our own pockets rather or the pockets of the group of people in the car.[75]

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[72] First generation female in London, dated July 10, 2007.

[73] First generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

[74] Carol is a pseudonym used to preserve this individual's anonymity. First generation female in London dated July 10, 2007. Carol has been a member of Willesden for over forty years.

[75] First generation male in London, dated June 2007.

In embracing the religious identity of a 'child of God' the informant communicates their status of 'somebodiness' and a relationship of belonging.[76] For many informants, this identity was especially important given the racialized and discriminatory environments in which they lived and worshipped. Being a child of God allowed them to 'deal' with discrimination and ill treatment knowing that in the end he would vindicate them. One informant expressed this identity in the context of being harassed by someone at work. Her response in the face of this treatment was to make a declaration of her identity as a 'child of God'. She stated:

> I would say I am a child of God you know and the blood of Jesus Christ's is dwell in me and his faith is in me and you are worried it's not me you're seeing in the night or day it's the Spirit of God using my image to warn you that there's something drastic going to happen to you if you don't change your attitude towards me. … Two weeks later this woman was sacked.[77]

For one informant and the wife of an informant, a major part of their religious identity is that of being a minister. The construction of this identity is especially significant given the prohibition that exists within some Pentecostal churches regarding women in ministry. For another informant, this identity was fashioned in the context of being pastor's wife and being very involved in church ministry. This was a ministry that gave her a certain level of independence. She states: "I was a driver and I had my own car, he had his own car. So we drove some mornings, we both go out together and sometimes I will go different places [since] I might be preaching somewhere else".[78] Since the retirement of her husband from ministry this informant has been involved occasionally in the preaching ministry at Willesden. Currently she is planning on speaking to the senior minister at Willesden to begin a ministry geared toward widows. For the wife of the informant, her religious identity was constructed in the context of being the pastor of a church. In this capacity she was able to preach, teach and officiate at services. However as her husband states, she was not able to conduct the communion or the baptismal services. Therefore although her ministry was validated – in that she was given a licence and was the

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[76] Janice McLean, 'Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord: Music and Song within Pentecostal West Indian Religious Communities in Diaspora, *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 2 (2007): 132- 133.

[77] First generation female in London, dated July 16. 2007.

[78] First generation female in London, dated July 17, 2007. Later in the conversation, this informant shared that once she went to a church to preach, despite her husband not agreeing with her decision. On that Sunday, her younger brother became a Christian as a result of her sermon.

pastor of a church, it was her husband, the deacon, who was allowed to give communion and baptise the believers. It should be noted that his wife's identity as a minister was also firmly fixed within the concept of a calling. He states:

> [After] her mother died she went to Jamaica [for] the funeral. … When she came back she said, 'Now my mom die I am going to move out to do something more for the Lord'. We sat down … [and] she spoke with me with the pastor. … She spoke with him and came back, 'just go, just go and preach'. And although you said go preach, if you've got the calling for preaching you can start even with your first neighbour you know. So she just start out like that and then after that they … they find that she's got a calling. … After a while she [had] to take some tests … [and they] give her a kind of a lay, lay license, lay preacher. Yes and that's where she started from until she get a little church.[79]

Manifestation of identities in the Pentecostal Churches

So far in this chapter we have examined the ways in which West Indian immigrants in New York City and London are re-negotiating and maintaining their ethnic and religious identities. In this section, we will analyze the manner in which these re-negotiated/maintained identities are being demonstrated within the Pentecostal religious arena.

One of the dynamics that has being a driving force within Pentecostalism is the issue of empowerment. This was articulated within the belief that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was available to everyone, regardless of race, education or gender. As a result many people who had been marginalized within the society could now become God's mouthpiece and in the process find a sense of dignity, empowerment, identity, and community.[80] For the first generation immigrants in New York City and London, this was also the case. The Pentecostal churches functioned as a place where they were leaders, the vessels of clay through whom God had chosen to reveal himself.[81] For many informants empowerment is also linked to their re-creation of home. Thus within the churches in New York and London, many of the rituals are

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[79] First generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.

[80] Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism,* 69.

[81] One common scripture heard amongst some of the members is 1 Corinthians 1:22, 'But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty'. (KJV)

conducted in a manner that is similar to those found within Pentecostal churches in the West Indies. It should be noted however that this re-creation of home is indelibly linked with the formation of a spiritual family. This family is based on their common status as believers in Christ and thus children of God. This is a family that is there to encourage, support, love and care for the immigrant as they navigate life within the metropolitan contexts. One informant relays her experience in the following way:

> I was diagnosed with leukaemia like six years ago. … When I found out, with church it took me a long time before I told anyone and when I finally did I think I told [a close church sister] and the pastor's wife. I wasn't going to tell people cause it was you know, just [didn't know] how to deal with it. In a way I remember I think the first time when I called the pastor's wife I remember [her saying that] they [the church would] call a day of fasting for me. I wasn't in church but a little bird told me, they asked everybody to fast. You know [from] the oldest to the youngest. …. I remember … going back to the doctor and doing all of these tests and the doctors tell me that at the moment if they see any changes they would have to start putting me on medication. … So then they have me do like a bone marrow tests. … I think I must have went to about four or five specialists and all of them found the same thing. But after going to them like twice a month, then once a month to do all the test to see if there were any changes, there were no changes whether negative or positive. … So for the past six years nothing changed. But I know that … lot of prayers, and fastings have gone up for me. I know God did something. … I believe that God heal me.[82]

Although this informant was angry about her personal life being revealed to the members of the church she says, "[their reaction] made me see that the people were really concerned about me with the fasting. [So] going back to the question about the day of fasting I was happy that the brethren wanted to do that".[83]

Another way in which the Pentecostal churches empower the migrant is by being a place where they are valued and celebrated. From the time of its development, the city has been seen by some people not only as the centre for economic, political and social activities but also a place of danger, squalid and the "exotic locales of forbidden sensual delights".[84] Simultaneously however, the city is also a site of freedom, isolation and continuous change. For as the German

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[82] First generation female in US, dated April 13, 2007.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Robert A. Orsi, 'Introduction: Crossing the City Line', in Robert A. Orsi., ed., *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 7

sociologist Georg Simmel noted, with the pursuit of the money economy within the city, there has emerged a "purely matter-of-fact attitude in the treatment of persons and things in which formal justice is often combined with an unrelenting hardness".[85] Thus there is the tendency for people's daily lives to be filled "with weighing, calculating, enumerating and the reduction of qualitative values to quantitative terms".[86] Within this quantitative environment, an individuals' worth is measured in terms of what one is able to produce or contribute to the society – which in turn is linked to one's education, race, gender etc. When the West Indian migrants are evaluated using this form of measurement, many are labelled as deficient. It is within this context that Willesden, Flatlands and Miracle Temple provide a place of belonging, support, encouragement, and assistance for their members.

One group for whom this assistance is especially vital are the undocumented. Within the United States, an individual's immigrant status is of primal importance.[87] For many West Indians, it can mean the difference between achieving the American dream and the status that it produces versus being excluded from various levels of the society and in some cases subjected to exploitation for others' financial gain.[88] For the un-documented immigrants in New York, both Miracle Temple and Flatlands provide a place of belonging, a place where one's immigration status is a non-issue. Within both churches the undocumented person is seen first and foremost as a child of God, a member of the church family. As a result, they are given various kinds of support and social care – information about jobs, housing, and immigration, prayer support, some financial assistance, and in some cases, an opportunity to legalize their status. Within the churches, the undocumented persons are not excluded from the ministry of the church, and thus have access to various leadership opportunities.[89]

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[85] Georg Simmel, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' in Philip Kasinitz, ed., *Metropolis: Center and Symbol of Our Times* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 32.
[86] Ibid., 33.
[87] To the best of my knowledge, I was not aware of any of the members of Willesden having an illegal status.
[88] By virtue of being un-documented, immigrants are officially not permitted to work. As a result, most the jobs that they procure are lower paying service jobs as nannies, home carers, cooks and/or cashiers in various West Indian bakeries/restaurants, etc. In these positions, the immigrants are not provided with any benefits, e.g. health care, disability etc. As a consequence of their illegal status, many immigrants are exploited by their employers and forced to work in appalling conditions.
[89] These may include leadership in the Sunday school, choir, auxiliary ministries, deacons' board, administrative positions, and participating in the preaching ministry in the church. Given the licensing and ordination procedures within Church of God denomination, it does not seem likely that an undocumented person could become a licensed or ordained minister in Flatlands. This may be a

According to one of the leaders at Flatlands, "we [the church,] will embrace all of God's children who are undocumented. [In fact], we have some in our church right now".[90]. In regards to the role that the church plays in the lives of some of their undocumented members the same informant states:

> They [the U.S. government] think that if you don't have certain papers, green card … you feel lost but to me we're not here to deny anybody. … At one time we could have filed for them [the undocumented members] through our church. … {in doing so] you have to consider you side, the church, [and it's] financial ability. … You were not paying them actually but you could what you call give them some help. If you're not here legally you have [no] … right to work. … Some people, they get a little thing on the side, you call that 'get it on the side'. So we, we try our best to help [a] few people. … So, … you have people that we file for and have gotten through now in our church and by right they're supposed to be, because that was the agreement that they would become full fledged members of that local church because since they are under the umbrella of that local church.[91]

Another area in which the churches have helped to empower the first generation is encouraging them to pursue an education and to be involved in home ownership. This is conveyed primarily through the sermons and the influence of the senior minister, and implementing measures to celebrate the accomplishments of the members. In both Flatlands and Willesden, it was observed that whenever a member obtained a certificate or degree, those individuals were involved in a celebratory ceremony during the Sunday Morning Service. It includes the individual being called to the front and the citation documented on the certificate or degree read aloud. Following this they were presented with their certificate or degree by one of the ministers. Although such a ceremony was not noted within Miracle Temple, they have designated one Sunday in June to celebrate all of the graduates within the church. They have also implemented a scholarship fund to provide some financial assistance to their young people attending university.[92]

One activity noted among West Indians immigrants, particularly among Christians, which encourages them to purchase homes, is a house

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possibility in a more independent Pentecostal church – like Miracle Temple. However, during my research I did not discover this.

[90] First generation male minister in Brooklyn, dated March, 2007.

[91] Ibid.,

[92] This scholarship is limited to the students within the church. They are required to complete an application form detailing why they believe that they should receive the scholarship.

dedication/warming party. In this celebration, members from the church would be invited to the new house to offer thanksgiving to God for the new home, request his protection and blessings for the inhabitants, and also eat and fellowship with fellow church members. Another forum that is used to encourage the members to pursue their education and home ownership is that of the sermon. For a minister, the sermon provides him/her with an important tool in influencing the members of a church. According to one minister:

> One day I got up and I said, it was a Sunday morning, I said among other things that I can't remember, I said that as long as I'm here I don't want anybody to come back on the pulpit and decry education. We had very few nurses and only nursing was the thing here. … But since that, since I'm here, I believe a lot people have gone on to university, some who have gone to do their masters, you even have people were working on their doctorate, who have started. … So I am pleased from that point to see the number of people who are studying. … I have watched people also buying their own houses. That's another thing that I believe in and talk [about] that people should come out of the rent house or lease or the tenancy places. You go into these tenant houses, you live there your full life paying week after week and when you're old you walk out and leave the house and you have nothing to show. So I supposed I have influenced people. I have at least helped people own their own house. And [a] lot of people here are house owners and the fact that house prices are going up it means that we can have something. Even if they haven't got their own savings they have a property.[93]

As the above documentation indicates, many first generation immigrants find their Pentecostal churches to be a place of acceptance, support and empowerment. However, it bears noting that for others, these churches can also become places of disempowerment and marginalization. Sometimes the transfer process, whereby various West Indian cultural and religious features are transcribed into the new context in a manner that enables first generation to re-create home, may also serve to make the churches places of exclusion. This was a dynamic observed in all three churches – Miracle Temple, Flatlands and Willesden. According to the sign posted outside of church building, Miracle Temple Ministries is a place for All Nations. However, a close examination of the church demographics reveals that its membership is primarily West Indian. So although Miracle Temple is located in a section of Brooklyn in which 85.6% of the population is Black i.e. African American, and only 32.3% of the population is foreign born,[94] this larger Black

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[93] First generation male minister in London, dated June 2007.

[94] See the US 2000 census data for zip code 11212. Website: http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/SAFFFacts?_event=Search&geo_id=&_geoContext=&_street=&_

population is not reflected in its membership. During fieldwork it was also observed that church entrances and church parking lot located on Thomas S. Boyland Street were gated.[95] Although the gates may be there for security purposes it does call us to question the type of image these padlocked gates presents to the surrounding community. Although Flatlands is located in an area that has a smaller Black population, this segment of the population is also noticeably absent. One leader states: "we have Americans here but some of them moved away".[96] Some of the possible deterrents to African American involvement within these churches are: the stereotypes often perpetuated about them within the West Indian community; the lack of outreach to African Americans and the other ethnic groups that reside within the community; and the prominence of various West Indian religious and cultural elements within the churches.

Within Willesden, the perpetuation of certain West Indian religious and cultural elements has resulted in the marginalization of several other ethnic groups especially whites. According to one informant:

> We would like that when you come into this church it would reflect the community. It will reflect various cultures, it will reflect different nationalities and I think that's what we would like however I find that unless we take a few steps back that's gonna be very difficult to achieve. And we will have one or two Whites in the congregation but whether they stay, sometimes they stay for short period … but on a whole and it's very predominantly a black community. And I don't think we're going to achieve this multicultural congregation unless we actually strategically look at the community, actually identify who is in our community, actually look at ways of bringing in, and we have to make changes.[97]

However this perspective about becoming a multicultural congregation is not readily shared by all of the members. According to one informant, the absence of whites was not due to the perpetuation of various West Indian ethnic and religious elements but instead to some whites coming and wanting "to take over [and] that sort of thing". She also states:

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county=11212&_cityTown=11212&_state=&_zip=11212&_lang=en&_sse=on&pctxt=fph&pgsl=010&show_2003_tab=&redirect=Y, accessed May 2008.

[95] Although the church has a parking lot it is not sufficient to meet the needs of those who attend the church on a Sunday morning. Therefore, the members park on the city streets near the church.

[96] First generation male in Brooklyn, dated March 2007.

[97] Second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

> They still have this superiority in them whereby they feel that they're superior and [do] not have to take instruction from us. … But as far as I'm concerned I'm not going to tolerate that's because at the end of the day really God is a God, what should I say God is colour blind, you see he doesn't look at our colour".[98]

Thus for this informant, the cultural and religious dynamics evidenced in Willesden allows them to create an environment where they are not discriminated due to the colour of their skin. Given the historical and contemporary racial dynamics existing within Britain having such a place of belonging continues to be of vital importance for many members of the Black/West Indian community.

Having discussed the ways in which the Pentecostal churches function as places of empowerment, it is also necessary to discuss what are some of the performative, and economic expressions found within the churches. One of the most important expressions noted within all three churches is the role of music and songs. In the Praise and Worship format, songs and the accompanied music are perceived "as setting the stage for the rest of the service".[99] However they can also function as a transnational tie that connects the individuals with their homeland. This is accomplished by using the same hymnal that is used in the homeland as well as singing the choruses from home. In their interaction with the host context, the songs and music expressed in the church may also function as

> A medium through which the migrant's culture and identities are celebrated and treated as the norm, and the migrants themselves are reminded of their identity as saints. … As saints they had access to the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, where their race, gender and education might limit the positions they could hold within the wider society, in the religious community this is not the case. … As a result, the marginalised … can become God's mouthpiece, or a vessel used for his service. … For many West Indian migrants, this experience is an emotional watershed. It is from this place of empowerment that West Indian believers are able to declare with fervour and conviction:
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> 'Press along saints press along in God's own way. Press along saints press along in God's own way. Persecution we must face, trials and crosses in our way. For the hotter the battle, the sweeter the victory'.[100]

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[98] First generation female in London, dated July 16, 2007.

[99] Janice McLean, 'Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord,' 130.

[100] Ibid., 135.

Another expression observed particularly in Willesden is the presence of a Rally – a Jamaican term for a church fund-raising concert.[101] During the Rally, several churches with which Willesden had an affiliation were invited and each was asked to present an 'item' – i.e. a song, a poem, or playing an instrument. Following each rendition, the audience were called upon to pay for the item. It bears noting that the price designated for each items varies depending on how much the audience was 'moved'[102] by the performance. For some of these 'moving' items, several individuals will engage in a standard Rally practice called 'fanning'. During the performance several members of the audience would surround the performer and begin to fan them with paper money. When the performance ends, this money is then collected.[103] At the end of the Rally, a representative from each team will come forward to declare the amount of money that team has gained. This portion of the programme is very lively – filled with laughter, clapping, and comments stating that 'next year a certain team will be the top team'. Money raised in this Rally was allocated for the renovation work on the church building. Thus in the Rally, one is able to note the ways in which various West Indian religious/cultural elements have being relocated and positioned within the very fabric of immigrant religious expression.

As the immigrant navigates the terrains of the host context, they not only re-create certain aspects of home but also adapt certain elements within their religious expressions. Two such expressions of adaptation noted within the Brooklyn context are: the presence of a religious enterprise; and the emergence of an annual Pastor's Appreciation service. Religious enterprise is defined as the engagement of the church in economic activity. Within its community Flatland functions as not only a church but also as a landlord. By renting these apartments, the church has gained an additional source of revenue, which has enabled the church to pay off their mortgage

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[101] It should be noted that within the Jamaican context the Rally is not limited to Pentecostal churches but is found in several denominations. During my childhood, the Rally was an established function within the church calendar of the Anglican Church that I attended. During the Rally the church group conducting it or the church is divided into teams. Each team will compete with the others to raise the most money.

[102] Moved is used in this context instead of enjoyed because as Christians the assumption is that the performers are performing under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. As the audience reacts to this performance, the Holy Spirit also moves among them.

[103] It should be noted that the practice of 'fanning' or 'spraying' of money is also found in African context, especially during weddings and dances.

and to become debt free in the 11 years since they purchased the building. For Miracle Temple, the addition of the Manor, the church hall, to the main sanctuary, has provided it with a space that they are able to rent to other churches and people for various functions. The money gained from this venture is incorporated into the overall financial resources of the church. One of the things noted about New York City is the lack of space. As a result, making optimal use of one's property is essential. In both of these examples of religious enterprise we see several ways in which the churches are utilizing their space for additional purposes that are beneficial to them. Another area in which the churches in New York have adapted to the context is in terms of the annual pastor's appreciation service. To my knowledge, this was not a dynamic observed within the West Indian context. However, it bears noting that such a service is relatively common within African American Churches. In Flatlands in particular, such a service has become a prominent part of the church annual calendar. This appreciation service includes a celebratory meal and a service. During the service, the pastor and his wife – called the 'first lady'[104]- are given gifts of appreciation from the different auxiliaries within the church.

Conclusion

For the first generation immigrants the construction and the internalization processes whereby boundaries are legitimized and identities are articulated occur within a migration framework. Thus, it is their myriads of connections linking their localities of origin with those to which they migrate that helps them to forge a nexus from which emerges their 'new' concept of the self and the other. For the first generation West Indian immigrants examined in this chapter, this process involved using the ethnic and religious identities from their countries of origin to negotiate what it means to be a West Indian Pentecostal in a foreign land. In carving out this space they call the host society to acknowledge their presence, not just as foreigners and thus the 'other' but as viable and important segments of the society

[104] The usage of this term calls attention to the manner in which these women crave out a sphere of influence within the religious arena that is similar what presidents' and governors' wives inhabit within the political realm. See discussion in Afe Adogame, 'I'm married to Jesus! The feminization of the New African diasporic religiosity' *Archives de Sciences Sociales de Religions* 143 (Juillet – Septembre 2008): 137-140.

For many first generation West Indian immigrants the immigrant church is vitally important. It is a place where they are empowered, supported and loved. However in this process of fulfilling these purposes, immigrant churches can also function as places of marginalization for both people inside and outwith the churches. It will therefore be imperative for the first generation within the churches to re-examine the ways in which the church is being constructed. Such investigation will be essential especially in light of the emergence and the coming of age of the second, third and later generations. Will these immigrant churches that have been places of acceptance and empowerment for the first generation continue to fulfil such functions for the immigrant children? It will also be important to investigate how these empowering elements found within the immigrant churches can be creatively translated into measures that facilitate the transformation of the wider communities. Answering these questions will serve to challenge the immigrant churches and their first generation members in regards to both their definition of what constitutes church, and how they can continue to be a manifestation of Christ's body in the world.

Chapter five: Creating space
Identity Construction among immigrant children[1]

> *On forms I put African-American [laugh]. I'm a born American but I'm not American. My upbringing is, I would say definitely West Indian and West Indian is from my parent's background. …I was born here [Brooklyn, NY], I went to school here, I would say it's a mixture of both but it's mostly a lot of West Indian brought-upsy.*[2]
>
> Second-generation male

Introduction

When the identity discourse is applied to the religious immigrant adolescent and young adult, several dynamics are incorporated into the discussion – multiple cultures, religion and youth. Each of these factors, both in their singularity and amalgamation, have profound effects on the process in which boundaries are legitimized and allegiances are constructed, practiced and directed in regards to the insider and the outsider.[3] According to Simon Coleman and Peter Collins, "migrants engage in multiple cultural worlds that are dynamically intertwined and are thereby involved in complex processes of self-creation".[4] Among immigrant children the accuracy of this statement become apparent when one considers the liminal position in which they exist. On one hand immigrant children are simultaneously being shaped by the worldview, traditions and practices of their parents' homeland and the host society. However, alternatively, they are also actively engaged in the process of conversion – i.e. various biological, psychological, cognitive and social changes. According to Erik Erikson, the primary task of adolescence is identity development, one which is only complete "when the individual has subordinated his childhood identifications to a new kind of identification, achieved in absorbing sociability and in competitive apprenticeship with and among his age mates".[5]

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[1] 'Immigrant children' is used in this chapter to refer to the members of the second and third generations. Given the age range that is included among these generations, it was necessary to find a term that communicated this diversity. For this reason, the term 'immigrant children' was chosen.

[2] Brought-upsy is a colloquial term used repeatedly by this second generation male to refer to his upbringing.

[3] Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity*, 170; R Cohen, *Frontiers of Identity: The British and the Others* (London: Longman, 1994), 199 -200; and R Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London: Sage, 1997), 59.

[4] Simon Coleman, and Peter Collins, 'Introduction' in *Religion Identity and Change: Perspectives on Global Transformations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 5.

[5] Erik Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1968), 155.

As adolescents and young adults navigate this terrain of self-understanding in a social context, a pivotal question that is addressed is who they see themselves to be[6] – not just in relation to others but more specifically in terms of their reason for being. In religion, they not only find a "natural medium for exploring these questions"[7] but also another key resource for both identity formation and maintenance. Given their liminality in relation to their parents and the society, as well as the 'conversion' process in which they are engaged it is necessary to investigate how these immigrant adolescents and young adults are constructing and developing identities within Pentecostal immigrant religious communities.

In this chapter, I will argue that Pentecostal immigrant religious communities function as a crucible in which several elements resulting in the construction of their ethnic and religious identities, converge and are fashioned into the concepts of self and the other, and the emergent practices that such a conceptualization embody in their lives both within these religious communities and in the society in general. This chapter will be divided into three sections, each highlighting one aspect of the development process in which immigrant children are involved. The first section will discuss how immigrant children are interacting with the host contexts. The second will detail the kinds of ethnic and religious identities that are being constructed by immigrant children within these communities as a result of their interaction. Finally the third will highlight some features of the dialectic process in which they and the other members of the religious communities are engaged as they all seek to negotiate the terrains and lived reality of faith.

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[6] See G.S. Hall, *Adolescence, its psychology, and its relation to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education,* vol. 2 (New York: D. Appleton & Co, 1904); and M.P. Strommen, *Five Cries of Youth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979).

[7] Geoffrey L. Ream, and Ritch C. Savin-Williams 'Religious Development in Adolescence' in Gerald R. Adams and Michael D. Berzonsky, eds., *Blackwell Handbook of Adolescence* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006 [2003]), 53.

Dealing with 'Home'[8]

The interaction between the immigrant children with the 'home' context is a complex encounter which is governed by and also generating various concepts and attitudes about the self and the other, which in turn produce certain behavioral manifestations in the lives of those involved. Within the sociological arena this process of encounter or meeting can be described in terms of assimilation. This term is defined by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess as follows:

> Assimilation is a process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life.[9]

Historically, several scholars in the U.S. have seen this process as following a straight-line trajectory which ends in identificational assimilation – i.e. the development of a self-image that is wholly American.[10] In *Assimilation in American Life*, Milton Gordon presents a typology of assimilation which serves to explicate some of the complexities involved within this process.[11] He is careful to note that the assimilation process is a matter of degree, as each of these types or sub-processes may take place in varying

[8] Although the assimilation theories discussed in this section deals specifically with the America context, they are also applicable to West Indian migrants within the British context. For the sociologists who studied their presence in the society, the assimilation theory was the prescribed trajectory. Thus given time, economic mobility, and acculturation into British society, then the prejudice and discrimination against them would cease. See Sheila Paterson *Dark Strangers,* 2 - 4

[9] Robert E, Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921), 735. It should be noted that 'home' is used to refer to the host context which not only facilitates the encounter between the society and the immigrant children but also plays a prominent role in the identities that are being constructed. See: Sherri-Ann Butterfield, 'We're Just Black: The racial and ethnic identities of second-generation West Indians in New York' in Philip Kasinitz, John Mollenkopf and Mary Waters, ed., *Becoming New Yorkers: Ethnographies of the New Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2004), 293-295.

[10] W. K. Warner and L Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945); Richard Alba and Victor Nee, 'Rethinking Assimilation Theory for a New Era of Immigration', *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4, Special Issue: Immigrant Adaptation and Native-Born Responses in the Making of Americans, (winter, 1997): 826-874. Although Alba and Nee acknowledge that the characteristics of the post 1965 migrants are different in comparison to those of earlier migrants, they assert that given time they too will also assimilate.

[11] It should be noted that in the discussion about assimilation, the 'American' core society that the migrant or minority is expected to integrate into is White middle-class America. See Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 84 – 114.

degrees. Thus assimilation begins with cultural assimilation or acculturation,[12] passes through structural assimilation[13] and intermarriage, which is accompanied by the full involvement in the core society, which is observed in the absence of discrimination and prejudice towards the immigrants by the host society. Gordon notes however, that acculturation does not automatically lead to assimilation. In fact he argues that in some cases "acculturation, of the minority group may take place even when none of the other types of assimilation occurs simultaneously or later, and this condition of 'acculturation only' may continue indefinitely".[14] Therefore for Gordon, the pivotal stage in this process is structural assimilation because once it "has occurred, either simultaneously with or subsequent to acculturation, all of the other types of assimilation will naturally follow … like a row of tenpins bowled over in rapid succession by a well placed strike".[15] When the straight-line assimilation theory is applied to children of White European immigrants who arrived in the U.S. prior to the 1920's, the predictions are confirmed – with each successive generation, the immigrant children were more American, and experiencing greater social mobility and integration into the host society. For many of these white Americans, their ethnic identities as Irish, Italians etc. became an optional, familial or symbolic ethnicity, one which they could emphasize or subvert depending on the circumstances they were in.[16] It is necessary to note here however, that the majority of the European immigrant groups, i.e. the Irish, Jews, and Italians, were at one time perceived by native born whites as being racially distinct from them and thus

[12] Acculturation or cultural assimilation is the first type of assimilation that takes place when the minority group arrives in the host society. Acculturation is when the cultural patterns of the minority group are changed to those of the host society. See Ibid., 71, 77.
[13] This is when the minority group is involved in large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society on a primary group level. See Ibid., 71.
[14] Ibid., 77. It should be noted that the minority group that Gordon is discussing in this section are the African Americans, specifically the lower-class, whose lifestyle he sees as resulting from its "derivations from slavery, post-Civil War discrimination, both rural and urban poverty, and enforced isolation from the middle-class white world, [thus he concludes that they are] still at a considerable distance from the American cultural norm". In contrast, both the middle-class and upper class African Americans are perceived as being acculturated to the American core culture. See Ibid., 76 footnote 26. For Gordon, the reasons for the accommodation only condition are two fold. One is spatial isolation or segregation in a rural context, as is the case of the American Indians on the reservations. Two, is due to 'marked discrimination … [that] succeeds in keeping vast numbers of the minority group deprived of educational and occupational opportunities and thus predestined to remain in a lower-class setting', as is the case with the African American lower-class population. Ibid., 78.
[15] Ibid., 80 – 81.
[16] Mary Waters, *Ethnic Options, Choosing Identities in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 90 – 94.

subjected to massive religious and racist theorizing at the height of the mass migration in the early twentieth century.[17] With time as these immigrant groups intermarried with other whites and moved up the socio-economic ladder these distinctions faded.

With regards to the children of the post 1965 immigrants however, this straight-line assimilation trajectory may not be their reality. Instead what scholars, such as Alejandro Portes, Rubén Rumbaut and Min Zhou, have noted is that the integration of these new immigrant children will likely be "segmented and take different pathways to adulthood, depending on a variety of conditions, contexts, vulnerabilities and resources".[18] An examination of the post 1965 immigrants reveals that these new immigrants constitute a diversity of ethnicities,[19] classes[20] and national origins. It is these diversities that will combine with the new contexts to play a critical role in the assimilation trajectory which immigrant children will follow. With regards to racial distinction, Richard Alba and Victor Nee argue that, even when one considers the racial dynamics found within the American society, some groups, such as Asians[21] and light-skinned Latinos may not be inhibited by racial distinctions and thus may follow the straight line assimilation process. Evidence for this is found in the relatively high intermarriages among U.S. born Asian children to whites, which Alba and Nee perceived to be an indicator of the Asians' acceptability to whites, as well as the absence of a racial divide.[22] For the other groups however, it will depend on where they are situated in regards to the intractable racial boundary separating those perceived as phenotypically

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[17] Richard Alba and Victor Nee, 'Rethinking Assimilation Theory', 845.

[18] Ruben Rumbaut, 'The Crucible within: Ethnic Identity, Self-Esteem, and Segmented Assimilation among Children of Immigrants' in *International Migration Review* 28, no. 4, Special Issue: The New Second Generation, (winter, 1994): 753; and Min Zhou, 'Segmented Assimilation: Issues, Controversies, and recent research on the New Second Generation' in *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4, Special Issue: Immigrant Adaptation and Native-Born Responses in the making of Americans (winter 1997).

[19] According to the US Census in 1990, the majority of the immigrants to the US are non-white – primarily from Asia and Latin America including the Caribbean. See US Bureau of the Census Report Table 3: *Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 1960 to 1990.* Internet Release date: March 9, 1999 at website: http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab03.html, accessed April 29, 2008.

[20] Some of these immigrants represent the most educated (Asian Indians and Taiwanese) and the least educated (Mexicans and Salvadorians) in the society. See: Ruben Rumbaut, 'The Crucible within', 751. It should be noted that the lack of education may have a direct bearing on their socio-economic status and residential patterns. Thus many Asian Indians are able to access various white-collar jobs, whose salary and benefits enables them to fit securely into the middle class and live in the suburbs. In contrast, their lack of education may relegate many Mexicans to the lower class and the urban centres.

[21] This is the case especially for those having ancestral ties to East and Southeast Asian countries.

[22] Richard Alba and Victor Nee, 'Rethinking Assimilation Theory', 846.

Black for those deemed as whites.[23] Therefore as these new immigrant children come of age, the primary question needing to be addressed is - into which sector of the host society will they assimilate? The answer to this question is determined by the pathway that an immigrant child takes. According to Portes and Zhou there are several pathways available to immigrant children. One path may take these immigrant children along the relatively straight-line theory of assimilation into the society. In contrast a second pathway may lead to "downward mobility and assimilation into the inner city underclass".[24] Still another path may result in the immigrant children becoming socially mobile while deliberately preserving the values and interests of the immigrant community. Having considered what the pathways are, it is also imperative to investigate what are some of the factors that contribute to the immigrant child choosing one pathway over against the others, bearing in mind that this choice may also determine the sector of society which they and their offspring will inhabit.

Context: - Describing the place called 'home'

There are several historical and social factors that influence what segment of society into which immigrant children will assimilate. Many of these however, are connected by one major underlying theme – that of context. For many of these children, unlike their parents, 'home' is their present context. It is *this* context that forms the reference point against which they measure all other places, including their parents' island home. It is also *this* context that shapes how their parents engage with their host country, and sequentially determines how they in turn are nurtured and socialized within the society. What then is the nature of the context in which the migrants and their children live? For the overwhelming majority of immigrant children examined in this study both in the U.S. and UK, their immediate context was the inner city – Brooklyn and London respectively.[25]

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[23] Ibid.

[24] Ruben Rumbaut, 'The Crucible within', 753. Some features of the inner city underclass include: abject poverty, high crime rates, and limited opportunities for educational or economic advancement.

[25] The others lived outside the NYC city limits in Long Island or in areas outside of London. These informants were second-generation migrants who were now married and raising their own families. For many of them, their decision to move outside of the city limits was due to the cost of buying a house in the city. Although they had moved, they still commuted into the city several times a week for church and other

For the majority of West Indian immigrants who came to London and Brooklyn, the two primary determinants of their place of residence were the job market and family.[26] They went where their skills and labour were needed but also where they had family and social networks that could assist them in gaining access to these jobs. In the majority of cases this was in the inner cities.[27] For those in the U.S., they made their homes among other minorities, especially the African Americans. In Britain however, the West Indian migrants lived among the larger white working class populations. However, in both contexts, they encountered communities that were caught in a "debilitating cycle of economic poverty, psychological despair, and violence".[28] And it is these communities that were to play a formative role in the socialization and development of the immigrant children.

For the immigrant children in the U.S., they are facing an economy that had been undergoing a series of dramatic changes since the 1950's. One change was the emergence of multi-national corporations across various industries. Simultaneously there was a movement towards a 'free market' economy which was believed to promote economic efficiency while maintaining the rights of the individual[29]. One consequence of these changes has been the outsourcing of various manufacturing jobs from the largely urban locations to other areas and/or some developing countries. According to economist Bennett Harrison, this current trend among corporate management in various industries is an enduring one, focused on taking the 'low-road' to achieving greater profitability, i.e. increasing one's profit margin by decreasing the labour cost[30]. When the job creation

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auxiliary activities. For these informants as well, their formative years were spent within the inner cities of Brooklyn and London.

[26] See Margaret Byron and Stéphanie Candon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective: Caribbean Communities in Britain and France* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 129; Min Zhou, 'Segmented Assimilation', 986; and Monica Boyd, 'Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas' *International Migration Review* 23, no. 3, Special Silver Anniversary Issue: International Migration an Assessment for the 90's, (autumn, 1989): 642 – 643.

[27] The exception here are those migrants who enter both the US and UK in a professional capacity. For them, other residential patterns in the suburbs now become a viable option. See Margaret Byron and Stéphanie Candon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 153.

[28] Ibid., 185; Milton Vickerman, 'Jamaica' in Mary Waters, and Reed Ueda, with Helen Marrow, eds., *The New Americans: A Guide to Immigration since 1965* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 488 – 489.

[29] Free market or free enterprise economy is defined as "business governed by the laws of supply and demand, not restrained by government interference, regulation or subsidy". See 'free enterprise' at InvestorWords.com. WebFinance, Inc. Website: http://www.investorwords.com/2085/free+enterprise.html, accessed May 2, 2008.

[30] Bennett Harrison, *Lean and Mean: The Changing Landscape of Corporate Power in the Age of Flexibility*, (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

rates in the U.S. were examined between 1994 to 1997, (19,000 in high-wage fields versus 400,000 in retail stores),[31] it is observed that for those in low paying jobs, the desired aim of the profitability strategy was being achieved. Thus in the area of employment, immigrant children are confronted with several issues: one, a widening gap between the educated high-wage earners and the high-school drop outs; two, an attitude of entitlement – i.e. having grown up in the U.S. they will not perform the menial jobs that their parents did in order to get ahead[32]; and three, the decrease of viable economic opportunities focused on assisting them to attain some form of economic security.

Beginning in the 1980's, the British economy began experiencing some dramatic shifts. On the one hand there was the expansion of industries focused on personal, protective and professional services. Simultaneously the economy was also experiencing a decline in the food and drink, transport, textile and engineering and telecommunications industries. The subsequent disappearance of these industries served to remove many of the ethnic minority population from the ranks of employed personnel. This development was particularly notable among West Indian males, who were concentrated in these declining industries, and therefore, were now susceptible to redundancy[33]. For first generation migrants, many of whom were close to retirement, they were forced to pursue other avenues of employment[34]. For immigrant children, especially males, the situation was starker since their entrance into the job market coincided with the decline of the sectors which were a traditional source of employment for many West Indians. As a result, skill level and qualifications became highly important. These developments were further exacerbated by the reality that many of these young men enter the job market with

[31] Katherine S. Newman, *No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City* (New York: Vintage Books and Russell Sage Foundations, 1999), xii.

[32] The parents who immigrated legally and possessed certain professional qualifications, primarily in the nursing and education fields, were able to obtain good salaried positions. For the non-skilled or illegal migrants, they had to compete with others for the low-wage service jobs that were available. It is necessary to note however, that for the illegal immigrant the situation was more precarious, as often times they may be subjected to various kinds of exploitation by employers or be involved in illegal economic activities. The sentiment of entitlement is also linked with the immigrant parent's goal that their children excel and achieve the economic mobility that they were unable to achieve.

[33] Margaret Byron and Stéphanie Candon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 86.

[34] One such avenue that was pursued was that of self-employment. By investing their redundancy payments into their own businesses, some men and women achieved socio-economical mobility. For many others however, redundancy produced downward mobility discernable by low-paying jobs in the deregulated and relatively unskilled service sector which offered them negligible job security. See: Ibid., 90.

fewer qualifications than their white counterparts.[35] For second generation females in contrast, their prospects were slightly better because their academic performance was better than that of their male counterparts.[36] It is noteworthy that the variance in educational achievement is also expressed along ethnic lines – with some Asians,[37] particularly Indians and Chinese, excelling more than Afro-Caribbean pupils. Within the employment sector, it was noted that although young men and women of West Indian ancestry were present in various managerial and professional occupations, young men are largely un-represented. According to Richard Berthoud this under-representation is a direct result of their poor education outcomes, i.e. lack of educational qualifications.[38]

Given the pivotal role that academic qualifications play in the job market in both contexts, it is essential to examine the status of immigrant children within the educational arena. In the US context, education and specifically "public education is seen as basic to [the] democratic political system, because it is both the main vehicle for equalizing opportunity in a diverse society and the major means by which the immigrant population is socialized into American values".[39] However for some members of the society this equalizing opportunity never becomes a reality. It is noteworthy that those most affected by this failure are those who reside in the inner cities communities. Although the children within these communities have access to public education, the compound effect of various social, economic and political issues may, for a large percentage, undermine this objective. In the U.S., school attendance is determined by one's place of residence, and therefore the problems affecting the neighbourhoods also exert a tremendous influence over the schools located within their vicinity.[40] These influences have been

[35] David Gillborn and Heidi Mirza, *Educational inequality: Mapping Race, Class and Gender* (London: Office for standards in Education, 2000); Terri Blackstone, 'Towards a Learning Society: Can Ethnic Minorities Participate Fully?'in Terri Blackstone, B Parech, and P Sanders eds., *Race Relations in Britain* (London: Routledge, 1998), 96 – 110; and John Rex and Sally Tomlinson, *Colonial Immigrants in a British City: A class analysis* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 216 – 221.
[36] Richard Berthoud, *Young Caribbean Men and the Labour Market: A Comparison with Other Ethnic Groups*, (New York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999), 23; and David Gillborn and Heidi Mirza, *Educational inequality*, 23-24.
[37] One group of Asians that is classified as underachieving is the Pakistanis/Bangladeshis. See: Louise Archer and Becky Francis, *Understanding Minority Ethnic Achievement: Race, gender, class and 'success'* (London: Routledge, 2007), 42.
[38] Richard Berthoud, *Young Caribbean Men and the Labour Market*, 56.
[39] Martin Carnoy, *Faded Dreams: The Politics and Economics of Race in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 129.
[40] Min Zhou, 'Segmented Assimilation', 988. Many of these schools are segregated and have a very high African American and Puerto Rican student population. Mary Waters, *Black Identities*.

further exacerbated by the decrease in governmental funding for public inner-city schools beginning in the 1980's.[41] Thus less money is allocated to the school for each child in the inner-city versus those in the suburbs. The end result is an overcrowded school system that is dealing with the lack of adequate resources, while also trying to tackle some of the social, familial and other issues of the student body. All of which, when combined, are exerting immense strain on the system in a manner that may hijack the learning process.[42] The unfortunate reality is that for many members of the student body, this is the case.

Therefore, "in a disruptive urban environment caught between rising hopes and shrinking opportunities, younger members of native-born minorities have become increasingly skeptical about school achievement as a viable path to upward mobility and have thus responded to their bleak futures with resentment toward adult middle-class society and with rejection of mobility goals",[43] such as getting a good education, desirable occupation, a good salary and decent housing.[44] Instead, some minority youths are encouraged by educational personnel and the society to excel in sports and/or verbal and physical dueling.[45] Since many of the West Indian immigrant children attend these inner city schools, they enter an environment where students shape each other's perception and expectations. However, the impact this process has on the immigrant children is directly related to the identities that they construct.

For the West Indian immigrants who went to Britain, education was perceived as one of the primary means through which their children would achieve recognition and status in the society. As such, the majority of parents "have academic aspirations for

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[41] Martin Carnoy, *Faded Dreams*, 131-132.

[42] Martin Carnoy gives the example of schools in the Connecticut city of Hartford. Ninety percent of the students are African American and Puerto Rican and come from the surrounding neighourhoods. Of the total student body, approximately half are from families that are receiving public assistance (welfare) from the US government. When describing the situation that they face on a daily basis, one teacher said: "few children learn to read at grade level in these schools, many have learning disabilities, and many complain of stomachaches, headaches, and other symptoms of hunger by midmorning". She concludes that the time and resources that should be used primarily for education has to be diverted as they seek to address some of the more urgent needs of the student body. See Ibid., 136

[43] Min Zhou, 'Segmented Assimilation', 987.

[44] Although affirmative action measures have enabled some Blacks to undergo self-improvement, the opportunities are still limited. As a result, the belief that Blacks need to be at least twice as qualified as whites to get a position continues to be perpetuated.

[45] John U. Ogbu, *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), 199 – 200. It is noteworthy that the primary model of success presented by society to many minority youths is the athlete and the rapper. Very rarely is the achievement educational qualifications offered as an option.

their children".[46] It should be noted that despite the injustices which they encountered in the society, many of the West Indian parents still felt that Britain offered their children limitless opportunity to improve themselves. However, the reality only served to expose these ideals for the wishful dreams that they were "because the obstacles confronting the West Indian child in the British classroom [were] tremendous".[47] These obstacles came in the form of exclusion, lower expectations, the perpetuation of various stereotypes and differential treatment towards minority children, especially for Black males. On the whole, many immigrant children are excluded due to behavioural problems or for exhibiting cultural-specific behaviours – i.e. wearing various hairstyles or walking in what some would consider an 'inappropriate manner. According to Richard Majors:

> Teachers often label or view a Black child who demonstrates certain culture-specific behaviours as 'having an attitude problem' or even being 'ignorant' rather than characterizing the child as one who has pride, confidence and a positive self-esteem and cultural identity.[48]

When this perception is coupled with the ignorance or lack of cultural awareness exhibited by several teachers towards the immigrant children, the result may generate hostility between the Black pupils and their white teachers. These dynamics also interact to create an environment in which many students, particularly Black males, become the constant subject of differential treatment and are therefore "more likely than their White classmates to be disrespected, talked down to, over-monitored … and to have limited chances to tell their side of the story".[49] It is essential to note however, that this differential treatment is not limited to the areas documented above, it is also visible in the lack of academic expectations that many teachers have for their minority students. One second generation male informant from London described his educational experience in the following manner:

> In terms of my school life I left school without any qualifications and I think for me school hadn't been a positive experience overall. … I was not really taking any

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[46] Ken Pryce, *Endless Pressure: A Study of West Indian Life styles in Bristol* (Middlesex: Penguin Books,1979), 120.
[47] Ibid. See also John Rex and Sally Tomlinson, *Colonial Immigrants in a British City: A class analysis* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 208; Tony Sewell, *Black Masculinities and Schooling: How Black boys survive modern schooling* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham, 2000 [1997]); and Brian Richardson, ed., *Tell it like it is: How our schools fail Black children* (London: Bookmark, 2007 [2005]).
[48] Richard Majors, 'Introduction: Understanding the current educational status of Black children' in Richard Majors, ed., *Educating Our Black Children: New directions and radical approaches* (London: RoutldedgeFalmer, 2001), 2.
[49] Ibid., 5.

> qualifications when I left school. … When I first left school my teachers … were suggesting that I'd be a grave digger, so I don't think the expectation were high of me in terms of just the school environment and at one point I was considering that as a career. … She [the informant's mother] felt that I could do better than that if I keep pushing myself more and when I went to college … I was surprised when I actually got my qualifications.[50]

Within the British context particularly, the obstacles that many immigrant children confronted both in the job market and education were in actuality a visual part of a much deeper issue – that of racism. According to Robert Beckford "a central feature of Black life in Britain has been ubiquitous racial oppression".[51] Ascribing an everyday perspective to racism is fundamental because it highlights the process by which certain "everyday practices become part of the expected, of the unquestionable, and what is seen as normal by the dominant group".[52] Such an evaluation does not mean that this 'informal' type of racism is harmless. In fact the opposite is actually the case on two specific levels: one, these daily practices of injustice may produce various physical and mental health issues among those experiencing racism;[53] and two, by demonstrating how "everyday racism does not exist in the singular but only as a complex – as interrelated instantiation of racism. … [Such that], expressions of racism in one particular social relation are related to all other racist practices".[54] For many Black males, there is also an additional dimension – that of gendered racism. As a consequence of their presence there has emerged a legacy of historical and social constructions, "in which they are often demonized or positioned as a threat to the majority society".[55] When such stereotypes and public representations are combined with constructions of masculinity the result is the manifestation of racism along gender lines. Thus for many second and third generation West Indians, particularly the males, racial issues are a prominent part of their lives from which there seems to be minimal respite.[56] One second generation informant articulates convergence of these dynamics in the following manner:

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[50] Second generation male in London dated July 8, 2008.
[51] Robert Beckford, *God and the Gangs* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2004), 32
[52] Philomena Essed, *Understanding everyday racism: An interdisciplinary theory* (London: Sage Productions, 1991), 50
[53] Ibid., 169
[54] Ibid.. 52
[55] Mekada Graham, *Black Issues in Social Work and Social Care* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2007), 56
[56] One factor enabling the pervasiveness of racism in the lives of Blacks has been location i.e. they reside and work in close proximity to whites. In many of these interactions they are treated with suspicion, or in a manner that give credence to the various stereotypes that have emerged about West Indian youth.

> At times, I think for me at times it's been very frustrating. You encounter racism at every level of society, every institution and when you say what you see, you're deemed to have a chip on your shoulder in many different cases. And it seems to be a very common chip on the shoulder because a lot of people who look like me and who have the same experiences.[57]

It is noteworthy here that the perceived 'chip on the shoulder' remark by whites in reaction to the second-generation's articulation of racism shifts the blame and places it squarely on the immigrant youth, who, it may be believed, due to some cultural or genetic fault is over-sensitive about certain issues and thus unable to function 'properly' within British society. As a result, very little attention is given to the role that various socio-economic, policing, political and judiciary developments play in facilitating the creation of a society[58] in which the immigrant youth, especially the males, are continuously perceived as the 'perpetual outsider',[59] irrespective of their status as British nationals.

Historically, the US has been known for its racism and discrimination against several ethnic minority communities.[60] As West Indian immigrant children come of age within the inner cities, they are not only exposed to the ravages of the urban environment but also to the racial dynamics that facilitate and perpetuate these conditions. In this context however, their perception of and reaction to these racial experiences is more nuanced in comparison to that of their British counterparts. The principal determinant of where immigrant children will fall on the continuum concerning the issue of race is a result of how closely they identify with the African American community, and with which class within the community that association is established.[61] This association is significant given that the majority of these immigrant children as stated earlier are growing up within urban communities, among a large percentage of lower-class African Americans. In the cases where immigrant children, associate closely with lower-class

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[57] Second-generation male in London dated July 12, 2008.
[58] According to Gilroy, the racial issues in Britain do not emerge from the perceived corruption of the romanticized homogeneous cohesive social-democratic regime by the 'other'. In reality, he suggests "that these chronic difficulties which periodically produce acute bouts of racial and national anxiety arise from melancholic responses to the loss of imperial pre-eminence and the painful demand to adjust the life of the national collective to a severely reduced sense of itself as a global power". See Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, xxxvii.
[59] Ibid., xxiv.
[60] These practices include: the confinement of Native Americans to reservations, the slavery of African Americans and the perpetuation of various discriminatory practices post 1960's civil rights movement; the internment of Japanese people in camps during World War II, etc. See: Howard Schuman, et al. *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997 [1985]).
[61] This is either the lower-class or the middle-class African American community.

African Americans in their neighbourhoods, then they will have very oppositional views towards race and racial issues within the U.S.[62] For those who identified with the middle-class African American community, their views on racial issues may range from being apathetic to moderate.[63] One distinct characteristic of this association was the manner in which they strive to distance themselves from lower-class African Americans who they perceived to be over-reacting or misrepresenting the Black community in the media and the society at large.[64] Thus, when asked about racism, one second generation male responded, "Race, everyone says it's nothing but it's everything. It still is you know". When asked to clarify what he meant by this statement, the respondent spoke about fellow Americans "misrepresent us, they call each other 'n' words, and stuff like that … It makes Black look bad, like [its] all about materialism and all about gang banging".[65] In response to the same question a second generation female responds:

> Well, I am not really big on the race issue, …I don't really identify with race issues, even this [report] in a news about the guy, the radio jockey, calling people whatever he call them, it's unfortunate, but I kind of think they kind of blew it out of proportion. I think we should grow up. People think like that all the time, he just happened to say it on air so that we hear it. …I don't get involved in discussions at work not because I don't know anything but I feel like I don't know enough about it.[66]

However it is imperative to state that the continuum of views, apathetic to oppositional, is conceptualized and practiced in the context of the perception and experiences of racial discrimination and prejudice.[67] Dave, a St. Vincent teen who came to Brooklyn during his childhood, states, "I wasn't exposed to racist stuff until I came to

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[62] See Waters Mary C., *Black Identities*; Min Zhou, 'Segregated Assimilation'.

[63] Although the majority of both the first generation and immigrant children perpetuated this tendency, there was one family who was very involved in addressing issues of race within their community. Both the parents had been actively involved in a local community group called the Black Association, with the husband having served in the capacity of president of the group.

[64] This racial tension and distancing is also perpetuated among many lower-class African Americans, who perceive West Indians to be people who have multiple jobs are who are unfairly benefiting from the societal developments resulting from the Civil War.

[65] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007.

[66] Second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007. The incident alluded to by the respondent was of a prominent disc jockey Don Imus who described the African American members of Rutgers University collegiate basketball 'nappy head hos' during his nationally syndicated radio program *Imus in the Morning*. The outrage generated by this comment eventually resulted in CBS making the decision to terminate his employment and resulted in a resurgence of discussion concerning race in the telecommunication industry and the public. Imus's program was later picked up by Citadel Broadcasting and now distributed nationally through ABC Radio networks. See websites: http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/04/12/national/main2675273.shtml, accessed on May 7, 2008.

[67] The perception and actual experience of prejudice is more prominent among second generation males than among females.

America but I do feel that a lot of times Black Americans play it out in a way that they wanna make every white person wrong".[68] Ruben Rumblaut, further confirmed the presence of this dynamic when he noted in a study conducted of second generation Jamaicans in Miami, that three-quarters of the respondents reported experiences of racial-ethnic discrimination or the perception of such experiences.[69]

Constructing identities

Having briefly documented some of the salient features of the immigrant child's 'home' it is now necessary to assess how they are interacting with this context and the larger society. This assessment however, rests on one pivotal construct – that of identity. For it is this perception of 'self' and the 'other' that determines not only the pathway they will follow in the assimilation process, but also the types of signposts that will be erected to point the way forward for future generations. In investigating this process however, space also needs to be given to interrogating how the immigrant child's involvement within West Indian Pentecostal religious communities facilitates their identity construction. What ethnic and religious identities are being constructed by the immigrant children within these religious arenas?[70]

For West Indian immigrant children in Brooklyn that I interviewed, the majority is constructing an ethnic or hybrid/hyphenated ethnic identity which incorporates various elements of their parents' ethnic identification but also gives room for characteristics emerging from their American upbringing.[71] This was expressed as Jamerican; Caribbean; Black and Caribbean; African Jamaican; or multi-race. In the cases where the respondents described themselves as African American, they went on to clarify this identification by stating that although they were born in the United States, their

[68] Dave is a pseudonym used to preserve this individual's anonymity. 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007.
[69] Ruben Rumbaut, 'The Crucible within', 770.
[70] This question is a crucial one given that these religious communities function as spaces where the first generation ethnic and religious identities are maintained and negotiated. Given that the immigrant children are coming of age in an entirely different social context than their parents – it is instrumental to see what impact this has on their identity construction within these sacred arenas.
[71] These include: working hard, striving for academic excellence, and showing respect for elders. For the males, the masculinity that is portrayed is of someone who is responsible, financially able to provide for his family and who can take the lead in decisions. The American aspect would incorporate leniency of seeking alternate ways of disciplining the second generation. Giving space for children to dialogue with parent about various issues and not a perpetuation of the 'be seen and not heard' instructive that normative in most families within the West Indian context.

upbringing was West Indian. The exception to this was Anthony who responded: "I would say African-American. But most people would tell me that I'm Jamaican because they say 'Oh I hear a Jamaican accent'. [Despite this his response is] No I would say I'm African American".[72] For one respondent, this question of self-description was a particularly difficult one to answer for the following reasons which he highlighted:

> Me, myself? I would say, this is very difficult because, I guess, I'm generalize[d] by my parents and, I guess, [by] everyone else. My parents would say that I'm a Yankee, they would say I'm American. Everyone else would say like I'm Jamaican. Me myself, I, to be honest I can't tell you. I don't know. I look at other races or other cultures and I see, like Asians, you see an Asian it doesn't matter if they're born here or not, they [would] still be considered an Asian. …So I don't tell people I'm Jamaican. I tell people my parents were born in Jamaica. You know I'm here but, it's kinda hard you know, still not the full blooded American.[73]

According to Mary Waters, several characteristics exhibited by ethnically identified immigrant children are the acceptance of:

> their parents' and the wider society's negative portrayals of poor blacks and want[ing] to avoid any chance that they will be identified with them. They describe the culture and values of lower-class black Americans as including a lack of discipline, lack of a work ethic, laziness, bad child-rearing practices, and lack of respect for education. …. [They also go to great lengths to] try to impress others that they are Jamaican or Haitian and most definitely *not* black American.[74]

However this separation inadvertently places immigrant children in a dilemma. For unlike their parents who possess various culturally identifying characteristics, such as an accent, the immigrant child has no such marker. Thus they are unable to draw a sharp distinction between themselves and the African American community with whom both their peers and wider society would identify them. In this manner, we find that adopting an ethnic identity results in the creation of a dual identity – because although they adhere to an ethnic identity, that identity may not always be visible to other people.[75] According

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[72] Anthony is a pseudonym. Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 19, 2007.
[73] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007. This interview highlights the fluidity of the identities that are being constructed. In their association with the wide society, the ethnic identity may have prominence. However within their West Indian circles – particularly around their parents and the first generation, the immigrant children's American-ness may be emphasized. In this regard, the identities are a negotiation of representation and interaction.
[74] Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 290.
[75] Some find other ways to highlight this identity through dress, keychains, hair styles, music etc. See Milton Vickerman, 'Jamaica' in Mary Waters, and Reed Ueda, with Helen Marrow, eds., *The New Americans*, 488.

to Mary Waters, "this dual identity also exposes the second generation to a great deal of racism".[76] This is because many Caucasians may treat them as African Americans until they find out that they are second-generation immigrants. In choosing an ethnic identity, immigrant children also place themselves in a position where they may be ostracized and ridiculed by their peers, who may see their 'ethnic' behaviour of getting good grades or speaking proper English, as 'acting white', (in slang - being an 'oreo'). For second generation males, in particular, peer ridicule may take additional dimensions where his masculinity is called into question.[77] For the immigrant children who choose to become African American, they are placed in "conflict with their parents' generation, and most especially with their parents' understanding of American Blacks. The assimilation to American culture is most definitely to Black America: they speak Black English[78] with their peers, listen to rap music, and they accept the peer culture of their Black American friends."[79] Linked with this African American identification is the opposition towards their parents' ideas, most notably in reference to their life strategy and child-raising.[80] This 'rebellion', as it is called by the parents, is met with a re-assertion of parental authority, which commonly results in continuous conflict within the family. Thus, Mary Waters concludes in her seminal work on second generation West Indians that those who adopt an ethnic identity are primarily from a middle-class background, while those who reside within the inner-city will adopt an African American identity.[81] In most environments[82] where you encounter immigrant children this conclusion rings true. However, in the West Indian Pentecostal religious communities there is the presence of a unique element which adds a significant dimension to this identity construction process especially for inner-city youth. This element is a family. Thus, these religious communities do more than give "adolescents access to adults other than their parents…. [they also provide] a sense of identity and belonging to the adolescents".[83] They also provide mothers, fathers and 'siblings' for immigrant children. To perceive these relationships only on a mentoring or socialization level would be to overlook the complexity that these relationships engender. For immigrant children from inner-city

[76] Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 293.
[77] Ibid., 290 -297.
[78] Black English or Ebonics is a dialect spoken by many African Americans, especially the youth.
[79] Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 296.
[80]Ibid., 307.
[81] Ibid., 298 – 301.
[82] Such as in schools, their neighbourhoods etc.
[83] Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 202.

environments, these church parents provide various kinds of support and perspectives on life.[84] For some immigrant children from single parent homes, it is their church 'mother' or 'father,' who assists them with their financial and other needs.[85] For the vast majority of immigrant children interviewed, their church parents were a source of discipline, love, and character formation. For one respondent in particular, his definition of masculinity and leadership came from his father/son relationship with one of the men in the church:

> He was like my father, I would sit down and talk to him about [eveything], in fact sometimes I wouldn't have to talk to him he would talk to me about it. He was our youth president he was also the Sunday school teacher for the guys, the guys class … He used to talk to us like his kids. And not kids as in down to you but as like his kids. He never minced words on what he was thinking at that time. He died when I was 17, 18 years, probably 19 … he would instill in us and always tell us that … you gotta continue the role, you gotta, whatever I give to you, you gotta impart to someone. … When I hit 20, 21, 22 and I started to be, be more active in church in certain things on certain levels, you actually start to feel that you can do, you know, that you gotta really impart because you start to really see these young men that come to our church and you know, you get to know them, you talk to them and sometime you don't wanna be too churchy, just be yourself and that's one of things evangelist [name] taught me to do, be myself. So right now I see myself doing a lot of what he has always told me to do, just to be yourself, you can't be superman all the time, be yourself and show them sometimes that you're Clark Kent and use that as a way of strengthening them, by being yourself. So some of the young men here they know me very well and I talk to them and they talk to me on certain things also. So I do help them … and that's because of what [I got] from him.[86]

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[84] These church parents provide discipline, advice, emotional support, love and care. For the immigrant children in Miracle Temple Ministries, it is the primarily the president and vice president of the youth group who will function in manner in their lives, although other members of the congregation also function in these positions as well. Evidence of this relationship is articulated in the way in which these individuals are addressed – as 'mummy'/mother (name) or daddy. One role incorporated into this relationship is the maintenance of contact between the parents and the children. During my fieldwork it was common to hear comments where daddy would be asking the children why they didn't return the call he had made to see how they were doing. This is consistent with the experiences of other minority immigrant children. See Karen Chai, 'Competing for the Second Generation: English-Language Ministry at a Korean Protestant Church, in R. Stephen Warner and Judith Wittner, eds., *Gatherings in Diaspora,* 298 – 299.

[85] One 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn would receive a weekly stipend from his 'mother' at church to cover the cost of lunch expense while attending school. At other times when he needed money, his biological mother would encourage him to call his church 'mother' to ask for help.

[86] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 1, 2007. For this young man, masculinity is comprised of strength and vulnerability, responsibility, and mentoring others. This definition of masculinity can be contrasted with that of the lower-class African American community where "in cultural terms, the prevalence of incarceration has made jail part of the symbolism of Black masculinity". Other features include the 'gangsta' who is ruthless in his criminal activities and is respected by everyone around him. See: Nell Irvin Painter, *Creating Black Americans: African-American History and its meanings, 1619 to the present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 384. Also see the portrayal of masculinity in the following movies about urban life in America – Jim Sheridan, *Get Rich or Die Tryin* (Paramount films, 2005); and Ridley Scott, *American Gangster* (Universal Studios, 2007).

Simultaneously, the religious communities also foster the formation of a tight social network among the immigrant children. For the majority of the respondents, they were 'born and raised' in the church. As a result, they have at their disposal a ready-made peer group with whom to socialize. One respondent describes this phenomenon as follows:

> When I look around, the people I've known for twenty plus years, majority has come for this church. So these people I grew up with, these people I spent numerous hours with from sleepovers as young children to birthday parties to adult sharing in their weddings and stuff like that. So it's a community you know, and most of us would say, who are my age [30], maybe not now, but it was an alternative, a safe haven for your parents versus having you playing with people from public school or playing with kids on the block or whatever. You made your community, your family and your church.[87]

Although this respondent may have misgivings about the perpetuation of this type of community amongst teenage immigrant children, there is evidence to show that this is still the case for some of the immigrant children. According to a seventeen year old:

> If you don't come to church you feel left out. … You look forward [to] us hanging out. It'll be days when we won't have practice for quite a few Saturdays and when we get together we get in trouble a lot because we don't get to see each other.[88]

During the course of my fieldwork I asked the teenagers to quantify the amount of time spent on their mobile phone with their friends from church versus those from school. The majority responded that they spent most of the time talking to their friends from church. Further evidence indicating the presence of the tight knit alternative peer community was observed every Sunday where most of the teenagers would remain after service to hang out with each other. In the creation of a family and community within the religious communities, immigrant children find a place where they are able to construct and maintain an ethnic identity. Within such a community, not much evidence of a full developed African American identity was found. For the respondent who described himself as an African American, it seems as if he may actually be in a place of transition in terms of that construction. Neither his responses during the interview nor my observations of him during fieldwork revealed the presence of those characteristics that many West Indian immigrants would associate with an African American identification,

[87] Second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.
[88] Second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007.

namely being lazy or disrespectful of authority.[89] He is someone who since he began to attend church two years ago has given up hanging out on the block and instead is involved in reaching out and mentoring children within his neighbourhood who he sees may be getting involved with the wrong crowd.[90]

Having outlined some of the ethnic identities that are being constructed by West Indian immigrant children in these religious communities it is now necessary to investigate what religious identities are emerging among them. For the majority of immigrant children, one religious identity that was being constructed was that of the 'saint'. This identity, having its roots in the Holiness/Pentecostal traditions is primarily noted for its conservatism in its beliefs, attire, practices and being apolitical in its engagement with society.[91] Adhering to such a sharp definition however is problematic because doing so will overlook the ambiguity that underlines this identity. For in addition to facilitating this conservatism and apolitical nature, this identity also provides some individuals with the tools to engage with the needs of those in the society at large.[92] For one informant it is this identity that motivated her to organize a Thanksgiving Dinner for the poor, and elderly, as well as becoming involved in the collection and distribution of clothes to people in the community. She responds: "I think for me it's a God given thing, where I have a drive to help people even at times I put myself out of the way, but never suffering because of it. So because God provides, I'm able to provide for others".[93] Other features of the 'saint' identity are: a strong emphasis on a dedication to Jesus Christ,[94] modesty in dress; and holiness and morality in all aspects of one's lifestyle. In

[89] Given that the observation of this informant was limited to church services, there is the possibility that his behaviour may be different within other contexts. However, based on what he said about his workplace and his interaction with young children in his neighbourhood, such speculation does not seem to be the case. When his behaviour was examined in light of the characteristics that Mary Waters noted among second-generation West Indians who were identified as African American, there was no congruence. Finally given the prominence of the West Indian ethnic identity with the religious communities in New York, very little space may be given for alternative identities. See interview with second generation male in Brooklyn, dated 19 April, 2007; and Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 296 - 300.

[90] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 19, 2007.

[91] That is being disproportionately focused on heaven and afterlife versus being concerned about issues affecting the world around them.

[92] See Ken Pryce's discussion of the 'other worldly' and the apolitical features exhibited by the 'saint' in Ken Pryce, *Endless Pressure: A Study of West Indian*, 176 – 218; also C. Eric Lincoln's and Lawrence H. Mamiya's caution of perceiving the Black church in the US as being primarily 'other worldly' focused. C. Eric Lincoln, and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 227 – 228.

[93] Second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[94] Jesus Christ is perceived as being central to their lives.

regards to dress, both the teenage girls and young women are asked to refrain from wearing trousers to church and to have their heads covered. For one respondent, her involvement within the church has provided the impetus for getting in the habit of wearing a prayer cloth[95] to church every Sunday and thus facilitating the formation of her religious identity. In discussing the wearing of trousers (pants) she states:

> Well sometimes I say come as you are but some people take it to an extent like the rule of the church is that you not supposed to wear any pants. But sometime like on Saturday when you come to [choir] practice if you're coming from somewhere you tend to wear pants and something like that, but like you will have on skirt with it, but it doesn't make sense cause you know you have on pants. Like on Sundays, I see now people are coming to church in jeans pants … and it be skin tight, so like now, I see why pastor enforce wearing a skirt. because [the] skirt [is] a certain length and it won't be tight fitting but fitting on you. I see the purpose of it because there be people that don't normally come to church and don't know you, and would think stuff, and won't be paying attention to the message as preached and just be paying attention to you. So I see why they have certain rules and regulations about dressing inside the church.[96]

Within this context however certain changes were also observed. In the area of adornment girls and women within the congregation were now 'allowed' to pierce their ears and process their hair. Among the young people there is greater liberty to talk about sex and other issues that they felt were pertinent to them. It is noteworthy however, that such discussions were always conducted within the Friday Youth meetings.

For immigrant children, their relationship with Jesus Christ holds a central place in their lives. Most of them will pray and ask for God's guidance whenever making a decision. For one respondent in particular, his relationship with Jesus Christ and the resultant calling to pursue a music ministry has produced some conflict with his mother. He states:

> It's not about not going to college, but the thing about it is that my mother [would] rather see me like do a trade, something more stable than music. Actually I do want to go to college for music and learn how to read notes and all that stuff so that I can really compose music. So right now, right now I'm out of school … but it's not that I don't plan on going to college. I have no problem with the education but it becomes a problem when you push your child in education instead of spirituality you know. And that's what

[95] This is a small doily that females wear on their head. This practice is linked to scriptures like 1 Corinthians 11: 5-6, which admonishes women to have their heads covered during prayer.
[96] Second generation female in Brooklyn dated April 15, 2007.

> I wanna make sure that I am doing, everything that I breathe, everything I do should work out to the fullness of God. So that's what I want to accomplish.[97]

The prominence of the saint identity is also seen in how these immigrant children interact with practices that are deemed as sinful or worldly. According to Larry, an aspiring musician, "I don't plan on working with the Kirk Franklins[98] … because honestly I look at them and they are the hell, some of the worldly stuff you dance to [is in] their music. I don't want that to happen. I wanted to be separate and holy unto God".[99] When dealing with sin in their personal lives, some immigrant children may take a militant stance against such practices.[100] For them sin is perceived to be something that will hinder their growth in the relationship with Jesus Christ. As a result, when they acknowledge its presence in their lives, they may voluntarily disqualify themselves from participating in church ministry until the sin is dealt with. This was the case for one respondent:

> Since I came back [from university] it took me awhile, it was about a year and a half until I came back in church[101]. It had to be a spiritual thing to empty out all the negative things that I took away [from university]. And you know I can honestly say I made a 180 from the days when I was in school and I changed all that. It was something I had to do, and [I] realize that you know, it was really hard leaving the wild life, the partying, the drinking, the hanging out and all that. So I would say that the road back, the road back was a hard one but my life has, I guess, transpired to be one of something that church I guess, the church would view as right. …. [After] I came back [into the church], a year and a half after I came back from college, I felt it necessary for me to be part, be active within how the youth [committee] operate.[102]

In the London context, the West Indian community inhabits a position that is similar to that of African Americans in NYC.[103] Thus they constitute the city's most inferior ethnic group. In this context, immigrant children encounter "restricted employment opportunities, police discrimination, bad inner-city accommodation, inadequate education, [and] the whole cluster of forces emanating from white

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[97] Second generation male in Brooklyn date April 15, 2007.
[98] Kirk Franklin is a prominent African American gospel and contemporary gospel artist. He is known for incorporating some of the secular hip-hop and Rhythm and Blues (R&B) beats into his songs.
[99] Larry is a pseudonym. Second generation male in Brooklyn date April 15, 2007.
[100] These practices would include: drinking, partying, having pre-marital sex, smoking, etc.
[101] What is implied here is not the physical church. The respondent did attend church services during this year and half period – not to do so would have raised questions from his parents and others since he lives at home. The concept of church that he refers to is the group of believers that he perceives as having a 'right' relationship with God.
[102] Interview with second generation male dated April 15, 2007.
[103] In this context, they become the comparable 'other' for Africans and other ethnic groups.

racialism".[104] Within the wider West Indian community, several identities emerge: one that orients them towards their parents' island home, another which involves the construction of a Black British[105] identity and one centred on avoidance, in which they downplay the distinction between themselves and the wider white community. For my respondents, who are involved in West Indian Pentecostal religious communities, the majority are constructing an Afro-Caribbean/Black Caribbean, or Black British identification. For those identifying an Afro/Caribbean/Black Caribbean identity, this identity enables them to root themselves in the heritage and culture of their parents and by association a community in which they are nurtured and accepted. According to one respondent:

> Generally speaking I'll [put][106] Black Caribbean. Before I used to write Black British but then I decided I didn't want to be Black British necessarily. I wanted to be Black Caribbean. So I tick Black Caribbean. [Respondent was asked to give her definition of the term]. That my parents are from the Caribbean and I feel that I'm still part of them, that I [am] wanted. If anyone['s] going to read the form, cause nine times out ten I wonder why they ask, anyway, but if they wanted to look at it, I wanted them to know that I was a Black Caribbean person.[107]

It is noteworthy that the majority of second generation females identified as Afro-Caribbean/Black Caribbean. For those who described themselves as British or Black British, they would give additional clarifications which highlighted some linkage with a Caribbean identification as well. For one such female this nuance was articulated in the following manner: "well I'll say I am Black British. Probably [I] really have to, okay, I would say Black British as opposed to Black Caribbean really. But I would say I am full

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[104] Ernest Cashmore and Barry Troyna eds., *Black Youth in Crisis* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), 1. These social realities are further compounded by the marked poverty that exists within the Afro-Caribbean community. According to data from a Poverty and Social Exclusion (PSE) survey, "ethnicity is a key factor predisposing children and their families to poverty". See Eva Lloyd, 'Children, poverty and social exclusion' in Christina Pantazis, David Gordon, and Ruth Levitas, eds., *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain: The millennium survey* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2006), 328 – 329.

[105] With this identification the immigrant children see Britain as home. They embrace what they perceive as common between themselves and the White native including language and literature and shared moral values. However this is done in relation to their awareness of the racism within the British society and their overt reaction to its presence. See: Peter Weinreich 'Ethnicity and Adolescent Identity Conflicts: A Comparative Study' in Verity Saifullah Khan, ed., *Minority Families in Britain: Support and Stress* (London: MacMillan Press, 1979), 103.

[106] Respondents were asked what option do they fill in on forms that ask about ethnicity as well as what was their response when they are asked about their ethnicity by an individual.

[107] Second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

Black Caribbean, I'd say in a sense".[108] For the majority of the third generation respondents,[109] they identify themselves as Black British. However, for them, this identification is more an explanation of their nationality and their skin colour. As a third generation girl states: "because I live in England and I'm Black, [and because] my parents are Black".[110]

Among second generation males the identities which they constructed had strong political undertones and an overriding need to discover one's roots. These included: Black British, a mix of Black, African, British and Caribbean; and Black-African. For one respondent who described himself as Black British, he defines this identity in the following manner:

> By Black British, actually, me being Black is in terms of colour, British in terms of nationality. But the blackness also has for me a political element in that it just recognize[s] that my roots are not in this country. But I [ ] can see myself as British also. I haven't even been to the Caribbean although I have a wider understanding of the Caribbean from my home, but blackness refers to mainly to my colour, yeah.[111]

For the respondent who has constructed the multiple hybrid identity – Black, African, British and Caribbean, he explained his motivation behind this construction as:

> Well, being Black [is] more about, not so much Caribbean, [but] just in terms of how, how I perceive myself to be and aah the British being the fact that I was born here. I don't call myself English, I call myself British. English seems to be more about people who are …indigenous to here, cause I don't know what that means, but people who have more of a rooted history here. In English you've got a lot of racist connotations attached to it. So those are the two and Caribbean is about from where my parents are from, that's about my ethnicity and African, well beyond just where my parents are from, but where I think I originated from as well.[112]

One respondent has rejected all identification with Britain and the Caribbean, instead he has constructed around the concepts of blackness and having an African origin.

> I suppose the African is more ancestral and it's more, for me, it's more rooted as opposed to Black Caribbean or Black British because I've kind of compartmentalized our

[108] Second generation female in London dated July 16, 2007. The sense that the respondent implies has to do with her cultural heritage both through her parents and from her involvement in the church. Later in the interview, this informant also spoke about the role that several church members played in her development of certain behavioural traits, namely being disciplined and having good manners.
[109] These respondents were between ages 9 to 13.
[110] Third generation girl in London, dated July 9, 2007.
[111] Second generation male in London, dated July 8, 2007.
[112] Second generation male in London, dated July 12, 2007

> existence within the continents as we've known it today, for example, so there's a Black continent as well. But by definition you can't have a Black British purely cause where [Britain] is situated in our world in a European segment, makes you know it does and generate Black people, whereas no more than Canada has aborigines, yeah. People are compartmentalized, you know, and the fact [that] some MPs say that, the fact that a horse is born in a pigsty doesn't make it a pig, it's still a horse and the fact that I'm born in white Europe with blue eyes and blond hair does not make me European. So from my personal perspective, you could say like I have done, Black, Black firstly and African next, that's it.[113]

It is necessary to note however that these identities expressed by the respondents are not static. They are fluid, undergoing various negotiations depending on the level of representation and interaction in the contexts in which they experience life – work, social, and home.[114]

The political implication underlying the majority of the male respondents' identities is a crucial feature. In this manner they are carving out space for belonging[115] as they continue to interact with a society that historically, has equated their community "with a 'culture' that is alien to, and inassimilable with, the British 'way of life".[116] According to Claire Alexander,

> Where nations are imagined as coterminous with ethnic, racial, or religious homogeneity, such an ideology imposes notions of absolute identities – an individual is either part of the

[113] 1.5 generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007. This respondent was born in Jamaica and came to the UK as a child. Later in the interview the respondent stated that he knows very little about Jamaica except what he has heard from other people about its beauty. He sees it as a halfway step between Africa and UK.

[114] In *The Art of Being Black*, Claire Alexander highlights an incident where she invited her main informants to a thank you farewell dinner. What was noted during the course of the evening was the "two distinct, and in some ways opposed, images of 'being Black', which are not related in any simple, unmediated way to external definitions, but to stances within and in relation to 'the Black community'". Thus while all the respondents would identify themselves as Black in relation to the wider society, with the community itself, this identity was subjected to different levels of interpretation and thus was expressed in various forms. See: Claire Alexander, *The Art of Being Black: The Creation of Black British Youth Identities*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 30 – 70.

[115] Stuart Hall, 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in Stuart Hall, David Held, and Tony McGrew, eds., *Modernity and Its Futures* (London: Polity Press in association with the Open University, 1992).

[116] Claire Alexander, *The Art of Being Black*, 3. The overruling ideology noted through British history was that an individual could not be both Black and British. To exist in such a manner was paradoxical. See: Ibid., 4. This ideology has produced a selective presentation British history in which the presence and contributions of Blacks prior to the docking of Windrush in 1949 is marginalized. See: Edward Scobie, *Black Britannia: A History of Blacks in Britain* (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company Inc., 1972); and James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society 1955 – 1945* (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1973).

> imagined community, or is 'the Other': hyphenated or 'hybrid' identities transcend national boundaries and threaten social order.[117]

This theme of 'being a threat' has exerted considerable influence on the manner in which the Black communities are constructed and how the society responds to them. The validity of such themes, and the emergence of others, in the construction of identities among subsequent generations, is still to be determined. What will remain however is the profound influence that their encounter with 'home,' continues to exert upon this process.[118]

One of the major critiques against the Black majority churches in the UK has come from within their own ranks – specifically from among immigrant children. Many argue that the church has failed to keep "pace with the modern, scientific, economic and political arguments that they relate to issues of life. While some openly reject the [church's] teachings as archaic, traditional and even mere Caribbean cultural taboos, there are others who earnestly seek guidance on matters of faith and practice".[119] For the immigrant children who have remained, like the respondents, they are seeking to chart new courses in terms of their religious identities. Although the religious identity of the 'saint' still rings true for many of the respondents, - the divine authority of scripture, moral purity and modesty in dress, however it is coupled with several modifications.[120] For the second generation male respondents in particular, the political disengagement that played a prominent role in some of their parents' religious identities have given way to an increasing emphasis on engagement with various structures within the society.[121] According to one respondent:

> It is [a] long time we've spent ourselves, telling ourselves that we can't mix the two. ... You can't be Christians and politicians. And we've really fool[ed] ourselves into

[117] Ibid., 4; See Garnet A. Parris's discussion of identity among African immigrants in Germany in 'The African Dispora in Germany,' 137-147.
[118] Although some third generation West Indians were included in this study, the majority were between ages 9 – 13. As such, their identity may be very much tied to that of their parents. Erik Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*.
[119] Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope*, 41. It should be noted that several who have rejected the teachings of the New Testament Church of God have left the church for other religious traditions – like Rastafarianism, or have rejected the Christian faith in general.
[120] Thus there still remains the stress on morality, modesty in dress, and biblical conservatism. However this conservatism is linked with various changes. This exodus experience is not characteristic of Pentecostal churches but is noticeable within other immigrant religious communities. See: Karen Chai, 'Competing for the Second Generation: English-Language Ministry at a Korean Protestant Church, in R. Stephen Warner and Judith Wittner, eds., *Gatherings in Diaspora,* 300 – 301.
[121] Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope*, 26.

> believing that. And we fooled ourselves into believing we can't be Christians and [also] lawyers which is rather rubbish. … And because we fooled ourselves that we can't be these things, they get filled by someone else. And other people that fill them are the non-Christians who can be lawyers and politicians and will be happy to tell you a lie whereas Christians should be filling those positions and upholding those principles and say I'm not going to move from this because this is what the word of God says. We will get back but it's gonna take something very, very drastic and major you know.[122]

Although these immigrant children, unlike their non-Christian counterparts will more likely not be engaged in violence, they are pursuing alternative ways of counteracting some of the negative perception of the community within the society. These ventures include the Saturday School and the play 'Black Heroes'. One respondent, who was actively involved in both activities, describes them as follows:

> The Saturday school, it's really a school which is designed to support children aged seven to fourteen. And it started in 1997, as a means of supporting Black children in the community in schools. Although it's expanded beyond Black children now, we have lots of different children coming from different nationalities. … At the moment I'm working on, … we are putting together a play called Black heroes. … That's a play which looks at a range of Black heroes, well Black people who people think, regard as being significant. It's people like Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and Mary Seacole and various other people throughout history. And it's a play whereby it tries to educate people about their lives. … There's an entertainer's on one side, academics [on] the other side. … There's ministers as well of the gospel, who are on there as well, who are identified. And they're looking at trying to educate and raise self esteem and also raise awareness in other communities, of the accomplishments that Black people have made. … I think I'd like to see the broader government taking on [this program] as a way of helping to raise self esteem among Black children. And I think that is still a major issue.[123]

In terms of adornment, the statutes advocating the prohibition of wearing trousers and jewelry, processing one's hair, and wearing a prayer cloth during church services have changed. In this regard, the 'saint' identity, especially among females, has lost some of its association with adornment to become more aligned with one's lifestyle – i.e. the individual's relationship with Jesus Christ. One respondent who highlighted this shift was a first generation minister who stated:

> It's kind of difficult to keep [that mindset] because Christianity is not so much [about what] people look like [but] who they are. … It was a pretty common thing to say you could look at the person and know that they're Christian. I don't know if it's quite possible. In the fifties, early sixties to see a Christian wear a pants suit, trousers suit

[122] 1.5 generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.
[123] Second generation male in London, dated July 8, 2007. This interview also highlights the influence of African Americans on the Black minority population in Britain.

> would be almost demeaning and they would say look at her, today that isn't an issue anymore. So the identity I'm talking about, so in the fifties to see a lady in a female suit, you would feel that person astray, today it's different.[124]

As members of a Pentecostal religious community, respondents upheld the authority of the scripture as the word of God. However, this belief was not being practiced in the 'do not question the bible' attitude of their parents. Instead they are diligently grappling with the tenets of their religious heritage and in the process are seeking to dissociate the cultural threads from those that are biblical. As one respondent articulates: "I think, … as we're growing and have grown so to speak, now we're in a different era where you can question things. You find out that Bible and tradition are two separate things and sometimes that becomes a little bit of a struggle, [it] seems to be a contradiction to some people".[125] The end result of distinguishing between core beliefs versus cultural traditions is greater flexibility in what 'the' Christian pathway should look like.[126]

For two female respondents in particular, a prominent construction of their religious identity is that of a minister.[127] This identity is particularly significant given the denominational prohibition on women serving in certain leadership capacities within the church – specifically as members of the pastor's council.[128] For the respondent who is the advisor on the pastor's council, she performs the same work as her male counterparts but does not have the title.[129] Although this is the case, she is ready to highlight how atypical this religious community is. She states, "We are one of the churches that have kind of stepped out of the box to have women on leadership because generally speaking

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[124] First generation minister in London, dated June 2007.
[125] Second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.
[126] Ibid.
[127] One important observation concerning these two women is the manner in which they are functioning as models for other women. Neither wear head covering when they are preaching the sermon or to church in general. Both are in prominent positions during the services – they may be called upon to lead the intercessor prayer or some other ministerial function during the Sunday worship service. The advisor to the pastor's council normally sits on the first pew along with the senior pastor and other leaders during the Sunday Worship service. Both women are highly regarded by their fellow male ministers, especially the senior minister. In the two months in which I conducted fieldwork, the youth minister preached on more Sundays that all the other ministers including the senior minister with the exception of a second generation male minister.
[128] It is necessary to note that although this is the case, within this religious community, women are appointed to this council in advisory capacities.
[129] In order to have the title, a decision would need to be taken at the General Assembly held at the denominational headquarters in the US. Although this topic has being put forward to a vote on several occasions, it has not won enough votes to be passed.

it's supposed to be ten men or twelve men, it all depends on the size of the congregation, but men only. So we've actually stepped out of the box by having women on it".[130] The other respondent in leadership is the youth minister of the church. Her major challenges was finding her place in a male dominated territory and also having to negotiate the change in relationship with people in the congregation who knew her as a child. She describes her experience as follows:

> I think, first of all as a woman it has presented some challenges because you have a lot of old school thoughts within the church, and you know at the beginning of my ministry, I didn't feel like I was particularly fitting into the protocol, because a lot of the words that the Lord would give me would … appear radical, but it was really because of the time that we're in and the people that we're speaking [to]. So I had to remind myself that, you know, God has given me a unique call and everybody's calling is different. And I had to learn to grow and appreciate that. I can't be fixed into a particular box. … I'm getting better at it now, I'm getting more confident with the voice of God and that's what I have to really strive [to do], to know his voice and that whatever he's set me to do I do it not because I'm necessarily comfortable but because I'm being obedient. But from a woman's point of view, it present[s] [challenges] … because sometimes I find in ministry that it seems like it's kind of a male dominated territory so you have to kind of come in not trying to prove who you are but know who you are. Growing up here as a child and getting to this stage, sometimes people, you have some that appreciate the growth and the process and give that kind of respect and appreciation. … [And] you have others that will look at you and say, you know, whatever they want to call you. … And that you have to, you learn to live with that and [don't] take it personal you know, humble yourself, yeah.

For the other female respondents, they occupied those positions in which women have traditionally been involved.[131] As a result, they did not have to negotiate the parameters of leadership in relation to their religious identities in a similar manner.

Appropriating their faith

Having discussed how immigrant children in New York City and London are interacting with 'home' and highlighted some of the ethnic and religious identities which are being constructed as a result of this encounter, we now proceed to examine the influences that such processes are having upon the religious communities in which they are involved. How are they appropriating their faith? What features of negotiation and construction are involved as they and the first generation seek to navigate the terrains of faith as expressed in their theology and praxis? In this section of the chapter I maintain

[130] Second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.
[131] These include the Sunday school, choir, women's ministries etc.

that West Indian immigrant Christians and the religious communities that they constitute are having a significant impact upon their children. However, this impact is multi-dimensional and at times seemingly contradictory –i.e. creating an environment in which the immigrant children are accepted, empowered or disempowered. Simultaneously, the immigrant children are also exerting tremendous influences on the first generation and the religious communities, as they reinforce certain beliefs and practices in matters of faith, while calling for the re-examination and possibly the change of others.

For many immigrant children, the Pentecostal religious communities in Brooklyn and London function as a place of acceptance and empowerment. It is a community of belonging – a place where they are nurtured, celebrated and valued. It is such a community that Flatlands Church of God and Miracle Temple Ministries provides for West Indian immigrant children in inner-city Brooklyn. For many of them, this is their church of origin, their 'home church' – the one that they grew up in. Within such an environment they are known, nurtured, disciplined and counseled as 'one of my children' by many of the adults within the religious community.

In Miracle Temple, this surrogate parenting position is most apparent in the youth group where the two main leaders are called 'Mommy' and 'Daddy' by the immigrant children.[132] These adults are in constant contact with the youths during the week – making sure that they are 'doing well' and maintaining the strict moral lifestyle that is expected of them.[133] Having grown up together, the young people in the church form a tight knit group – they are each others friends, and they hang out together.[134] For Mary, who attends Flatlands Church of God she responds:

> I can say, to me, if you grow up in a church they are partially responsible for raising you in a sense so they play a big part in who you gonna grow up to be. So when you see me, like I'd say some people here I'm similar to because we grew up here, we all grew up in the same church so our mindset is gonna be similar and things like that.[135].

For many immigrant children the churches also function as a place of empowerment and where various leadership skills are acquired. In the US context, the majority of the

[132] The youth group members range in age from 7-25.
[133] This includes no drinking, pre-marital sex, or engagement in 'bad' behaviour.
[134] As indicated earlier, these respondents are in more contact – via the internet or their mobile phones – with their friends from church than with those from school.
[135] Mary is a pseudonym. Second generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

immigrant children who were interviewed were also involved in various ministries within the churches. These included: as Sunday school teachers, Praise and Worship leaders, ushers, Youth choir members, Youth leaders, ministers and musicians.[136] For one second generation male, leadership training came as a result of being encouraged to officiate and organize various youth services. He describes his experience as follows:

> What evangelist [name] used to do first was to give us, to start us to get bolder like giving a word [for the] youth service so he'll [say to you] two weeks in advance, 'so [name]' he use to do that to me all the time, 'two weeks, you doing exhortation. Do it on whatever topic, you doing an exhortation'. [His response was] 'Oh my God!'… [note that the youth was encouraged to take total responsibility for this service]. So you'll have to think of a topic, you've got [to] think of people who you gotta ask to come and bring forth your topic. [laugh] Oh gosh! That was the hardest thing to do but that was a stepping stone … it pushed me out there, it made me know how I have to present myself on that level.[137]

Incorporated in the process of empowerment is the creation of an environment where the immigrant children's religious 'calling' can be discerned. For many of the young people in leadership in Miracle Temple Ministries, this process was facilitated in the youth group. As a result, it was the youth leaders who would point out what their 'calling' was and also provide safe places where this 'calling' can be tested and practiced. During a group interview this procedure was described by a youth leader.[138] He stated:

> Youth leader: If you look at it that way that's why pastor is there and then you have [the youth leader] underneath pastor and [the youth leader] could tell each and every one of you all where your calling is because that's how you all know, isn't it?
>
> Teenager: Yeah she's around us more

[136] In Miracle Temple, during the singing of the hymns, an adult woman would play the organ. Sometimes she would be accompanied by a teenager on the keyboard. This was also the case when the adult choir was singing. However during praise and worship and whenever the youth choir sang, it was the teenager and the band that played. At Flatlands Church of God many members of the second generation are involved in various ministries of the church. However, this is especially the case for the pastor's children. The three that attend are the Youth minister, music minister, musicians and the ones coordinating the audio-visual elements of the service. The eldest son was appointed as associate minister in late 2007 and is the person who will most likely replace his father when he retires from ministry in the next couple of years.

[137] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 1, 2007. It should be noted that the evangelist that this respondent refers to in his interview was one of the leaders of the youth group and functioned as the 'father' figure within the group.

[138] This youth leader is the secondary youth leader. His duties had become more significant due to the primary youth leader's illness. It is this youth leader who functions as the 'father' figure on the group. The primary leader is female and thus fulfils a 'mother's' functions.

> Youth leader: She's the one who is around you all. She's the one who point out certain things and say okay [name] your calling is going to do praise and worship. So it is coming from the head, it might not directly come from the pastor and that's why everybody gonna say it gotta come directly from pastor not all the time. If not pastor, somebody else, [the youth leader] might come to you and say okay brother [name] do this and you're like okay, and you be like because it's not coming from pastor you don't want to do it. That's what I'm saying it don't have to come from pastor for us to know our calling [Teenagers respond: Yeah] somebody else who know, who may have discern, have certain discernment they will say this is what you're called to do.[139]

This discernment process was acknowledged by all the second generation respondents who served in a leadership capacity within Miracle Temple. For some respondents, being chosen to serve in a certain ministry was a shock. Their acceptance was based on their understanding that their youth leader had discerned their calling. One member of the Praise and Worship team describes his experience: "I got, I got chose to do praise and worship. I was kind of shocked that [the youth leader], she called and asked me to do it, like she asked me to be on the praise and worship team. I guess [she] notice that, that was my calling to do that".[140]

For many second generation immigrants in London, the church has functioned as a place of acceptance and empowerment. It was within this environment that they received the training that later enabled them to function as members of the pastor's council, coordinator of the Saturday School Programme, Sunday school teachers, Choir director, member of the ladies' ministry board, etc. According to one informant, the church has provided her with various skills that she has later utilized in both religious and secular settings. Two specific skills that she acquired were public speaking and the ability to relate to people from various generations. She also states that "when you're out maybe in a secular job or outside of this church community, you realize that you're able to do certain things but then you think, 'Well where did I get that training?' It maybe was from the church".[141] This empowerment feature of the church was also confirmed by a second generation male informant who stated: "I think I've gained confidence maybe from doing things in church that perhaps I didn't have in school, having the opportunity, being pushed to do things a little bit more in church more than I was being pushed in

[139] Group interview with 1.5 and second generation males and females in Brooklyn, dated April 11, 2007.
[140] 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007. It is necessary to note that the person who asked him to be on the Praise and worship team was the leader of the youth group.
[141] Second generation female in London dated July 9, 2007.

school has given me perhaps more confidence and I feel more confident when in terms of public speaking and communicating with groups of people".[142] This interview underscores how pivotal the empowerment dynamic remains especially in regards to Black males. In a society where they are expected to under-perform or be involved in gang and criminal activity, the opportunity to be engaged in various kinds of leadership is very significant.

Intricately connected to the idea of the church being a place of empowerment is the belief that it also functions as a nexus for support and guidance. For many of my informants this was certainly the case. According to one informant "church more or less has played a big, big role in terms of people giving me directions, and setting an example for us especially the older people in the church they more curb me you know sometimes I would be naughty. They say things out of love but you didn't see it at that young age … [but] as you grow older I see why they said [that] to me".[143] It is also noteworthy among this group that when they were growing up, the majority of their close friends were also involved in church. In this manner the church also operated as a location for peer socialization and affirmation. For some members of the third generation, the church provides them with a safe place to socialize, receive assistance with their school work, and gain an alternative to the role models presented to them by society. What is significant is that the beneficiaries of these programs come from the church and the wider community. Through a mentoring program, "people [in the church] who are trained in particular areas of work such as teachers or accountants or ministers, … give support to other people, younger people coming up in the church". Although the other programs like career days, Saturday school[144] and Youth club are open to the young people in the church, most of the recipients are from within the community. I was told by a mother of one of the attendants of the Youth club that she was happy to have a safe place where her son could go on a Friday night to socialize. Having such a place was important given the violence in the surrounding areas.[145]

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[142] Second generation male in London dated July 8, 2007.
[143] Second generation female in London dated July 16, 2007.
[144] According to one respondent, the Saturday school was started in Willesden Church in 1997 "as a means of supporting Black children in the community schools". This program has since expanded to include children from other nationalities. See interview with second generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.
[145] Conversation with a mother of one of the male attendants. This conversation took place in the church hall when I went on a Friday night to observe what occurred during the Friday Youth club.

It is necessary to state however that these churches not only function as places of acceptance and empowerment, but for some immigrant children they can be places of marginalization and disempowerment. In the churches in Brooklyn, where various West Indian religious and cultural traditions are given a prominent position, it seems that very little space is made for immigrant children to adopt an African American identity or try to effect major changes within the church structures. In fact, within this context, such measures may be perceived by the leaders and many first generation immigrants as disrespect or 'rebellion'. Although I did not find any informant who conformed to the characteristics that Mary Waters associated with an African American identity,[146] I did find one who was more pro-American in comparison to the others. During the group interview, it was interesting to observe how this informant's divergent views were addressed by the youth leaders and other second generation migrants. In most of the responses, particularly those of the youth leader, his views were construed as him 'misunderstanding' what was discussed. Thus, his perspective on the church's lack of outreach to young people, a ministry which he believes needs to be addressed and approved by the senior pastor, was interpreted as him failing to understand that everyone should be actively engaged in fulfilling their God-given roles and not wait on the pastor to do things.[147] From my observations of this and other immigrant congregations within the NYC context,[148] I believe that this teenager's view was insightful especially given the critical role that the leadership plays in what occurs in the church.

One consequence of the maintenance of various cultural and religious traditions within the Pentecostal churches in Brooklyn has been the creation of an atmosphere that some American born children find to be boring or irrelevant. During my fieldwork, I observed that several immigrant children exhibited behaviours which communicated this reality. These included: playing with their mobile phones; talking with their peers; sleeping; and doodling during the Sunday service. For many of these young people, their church attendance was probably due to familial obligation. One phrase that I encountered during fieldwork and my membership within an immigrant church was "as long as you live in this house you will have to attend church". Such a stance typically resulted in the

[146] See: Mary Waters, *Black Identities*, 296 - 300
[147] Group interview in Brooklyn dated April 11, 2007.
[148] In many of these congregations the senior minister and founder has primary authority over every aspect of the church. Thus to seek to change any element without their approval could be seen a trying to usurp or undermine their authority.

immigrant child exhibiting the above mentioned behaviour and also dissociating themselves from church and maybe Christianity itself once they are able to leave home.[149]

Another way in which these religious communities can marginalize or disempower the immigrant children in their midst is by failing to adequately prepare them to engage with society. In their desire to provide them with a 'safe' and supportive environment, they may create a very sheltered environment which in turn makes it difficult for the young people to navigate the social terrains that they will face when they leave home. According to one informant:

> So when I went away to school [university] and was living there it was like out of the protection of like church and home and where I was really raised I wasn't exactly living, I wasn't reinforcing anything that I learned here. … Again coming out of, not having grown up with say, you know, a lesbian or a homosexual here and just having [it] in your face constantly and all those new ideas they present in the classroom and you know and challenge what you know. We never had those kind of discussions here to say okay when you go way to school you gonna maybe come up against this or cults on campus will try to draw you.[150]

Within the London context, one telling critique of the church by young people has been its perceived failure to engage with the 'real' issues that they face within the society. As the second generation were growing up in the 1970's and 1980's many parents were unaware or chose to overlook many of the racial dynamics that their children were facing. Thus many of their children came to see their parents and the church as providing very little space for their perspectives – many of which are focused on seeing systematic changes implemented within the church and the wider society. The result was the exodus of several immigrant children from the churches and their involvement in other religious groups, like Rastafari and other forms of active engagement with the society.[151] For those who remained, they used the tools that they had gained to slowly elicit changes

[149] Although I was not able to find definite figures on the number of young people who left Miracle Temple and Flatlands, I would estimate this number to be about 30% of the young people. This estimation is based on what I have observed both among some of my relatives who are immigrant children and some young men that I had contact with while I attended a Pentecostal West Indian immigrant church in the US. Acquiring definite figures from the church's leadership could also be difficult given the complex dynamics that surround this 'exodus'. How will the leadership and members view the 'exodus'? Is the absence of these young people due to the church's failure to care for them? Alternatively, how will the leadership and members relate to those who some may perceived as having chosen to 'go astray'?

[150] Second generation female in Brooklyn dated April 15, 2007.

[151] This may have included gang related and criminal activities, as well as the organisation of protests marches in response to what was perceived to be police injustice.

within the system. For these youth however, the church continued to function at various times as places of disempowerment and marginalization. Like their US counterparts, many were ill prepared to face life away from home. Another area of marginalization came in the form of the pressure placed on pastors' children. According to one informant:

> It was a lot of pressure, a great deal of pressure and I suppose it's hard to articulate it perfectly but to sum it up you pretty much were highlighted and pinpointed most times and it was incumbent upon you to be really responsible in terms of the faith. Some of it was fine, you could just deal with it but it was when it became difficult you kind of thought. "Well, aah this is a bit difficult, this is a bit, it infringes on who you're as a person and in terms of your development". In particular I think of the church as [being] very strong on no makeup and no jewelry at the time. And when I was growing up, at the age of fourteen [or] thereabouts you wanted to experiment a little bit. In fact you can't do that, you're pastors daughter, you can't do that and I just thought, "Oh I can't wait until I'm old enough I can just leave, you know.[152]

As the immigrant children are coming of age in Brooklyn and London they are challenging their religious communities to re-examine and modify both their beliefs and practices. It in necessary to highlight however, that this challenge is more pronounced in the London church in comparison to those in Brooklyn. There are several factors for this difference: namely the types of identities being constructed, the demographics within the churches, and the receptivity among the first generation, especially among the leadership, in regards to the proposed changes.

As a result of constructing ethnic and religious identities similar to those of their parents, the immigrant children in Brooklyn have come to accept many West Indian cultural and religious traditions. In both Miracle Temple, and Flatlands, the worship service, liturgy, administrative structure and religious tenor was organized in a fashion reminiscent of its West Indian heritage.[153] Thus the hymns sung during various church services were from the Redemption hymnal[154] or an equivalent hymnal, and many

[152] Second generation female in London dated July 19, 2007.
[153] This dynamic was noted in several of the Friday Youth meetings that I attended. During these meetings, young people would lead in the praise and worship time and prayer. The majority of the choruses sung were of West Indian origin. This was followed by a 45 minute talk or bible study led by one of the adult leaders – focused on admonishing the young people to live in accordance with the scriptures and not 'sell out' to the world. After this an offering was collected and the meeting closed in prayer.
[154] This hymnal published in the late nineteenth early twentieth century, has become a staple in Jamaica within the several Pentecostal churches. It was noted on a visit to a church in Jamaica where the founder of Miracle Temple Ministries had previously served as a minister, that this was the hymnal used during services.

choruses were West Indian in origin.[155] In terms of demographics, the Brooklyn churches are primarily first generation.[156] This feature continues to be a permanent characteristic of the churches because of the ongoing influx of new West Indians immigrants[157] to the city. Within Miracle Temple, this generational dominance was translated into the absence of immigrant children among those occupying key leadership positions. However despite these dynamics, in the areas where they have influence they are heralding change.[158] Thus within the youth group they are ensuring that sexual issues are discussed and students are being more adequately prepared to interact with the university environment.[159] In Flatlands Church of God by contrast, there were three immigrant children in key leadership positions - a deacon, the youth/associate minister and the music minister. What is significant however is that two of these individuals were the pastor's children.[160] As a result, they are very involved in those activities[161] that foster the development of leadership skills amongst the youth.[162] For some of the other immigrant children, they are trying to challenge the leadership into creating an environment in which more young people are having access to the leadership training opportunities that the churches provide. The presence of the immigrant children have also resulted in the use of audio-visual technology during some services, and the prevalence of contemporary choruses during Praise and worship.[163]

[155] Although contemporary choruses incorporated into the service, it is limited to Praise and Worship section.
[156] As a result the re-creation of West Indian religious practices is very prominent. In fact for some members, it is this re-creation that was the impetus for them joining the church.
[157] This group of new migrants may be comprised of both legal and illegal immigrants.
[158] This includes the youth group, youth choir, Praise and worship group and the Sunday school. It bears noting that these changes exert very little impact on the overall structure and ministry of the church.
[159] This includes telling young people about the realities of University life and helping them to develop strategies on deal with the challenges.
[160] Their parents are the senior pastor and the only licensed minister in the church. It should be noted that the son was appointed as assistant minister at the end of 2007. Since then he has been taking on additional roles in the church. His younger brother is one of the main musicians in the church.
[161] These activities include: preaching, leading praise and worship, coordinating the Sunday services, etc.
[162] When the church was started in 1998, it consisted of only the senior pastor and his family. Thus it was necessary for his children to be involved in various ministries. Although the church now has more members, the high levels of participation among the pastor's children have remained the same.
[163] It bears noting however, that the main initiators of these changes were the pastor's children.

Negotiating change

For the churches in Brooklyn, two major challenges that they will face as the immigrant children mature is relevance and creating space. How will they make the Christian faith which is now so embodied in West Indian cultural and religious traditions relevant to the 'disinterested' American born children, particularly those who are constructing modified or non-West Indian ethnic and religious identities? How will certain aspects of the liturgy - the use of hymns and lecture style sermon intersect with their media dominated learning style? How will these churches create spaces of belonging for the immigrant children? Will room be made for their perspectives, especially those that may call for major changes in the life of the church? For these churches in particular the challenges posed by the immigrant children are significant, in that they will determine the future of the church's existence. For, unless the Christian faith is made relevant and spaces of belonging are created, many immigrant children may not find it necessary to stay.

For the immigrant children in London, the construction of hybrid identities is coupled with championing measures that are resulting in major liturgical and structural changes within the church. Concurrently, the churches are undergoing a demographic shift from a first generation membership to a primarily second and third generation one.[164] It should be noted that although the first generation still occupy the majority of the senior ministerial positions within the denomination, the immigrant children occupy many of the other leadership positions within the churches. As a result, they are able to exert a tremendous impact upon the church's ministries at the local level. In Willesden in particular, the immigrant children's presence in key leadership positions is linked to the receptivity of the senior minister to see the church change in order to be relevant to its membership, and to the community. He states, "When I came here [to Willesden], the Jamaican culture or sub-culture is very strong and it dominates others. … and that from leadership position had to help to change that".[165] This was accomplished by insisting that the members speak English and not their native dialects. As a result of the

[164] The first generation now in their 60's to 80's are experiencing decline due to death or return migration to their island homes.
[165] First generation minister in London, dated June 2007.

collaboration between the immigrant children and the first generation,[166] particularly the senior minister, many of the West Indian cultural and religious traditions in the church are replaced by more contemporary expressions of faith. Thus, the church hymnal and Pew Bible[167] have been replaced by contemporary choruses and Bible verses projected onto an overhead screen and two television monitors. The religious dictum concerning dress has changed with women wearing trousers being allowed to sit on the rostrum, and lead worship during the services. Another major change is the allowance of women to function in key ministerial positions within the church and to preach with their heads uncovered.[168] As the third generation comes of age in Willesden their presence and absence are forcing many church leaders[169] to grapple with matters of belief and practice. One major area is in terms of dress, specifically what constitutes 'proper' church attire. Some of the questions being asked are: are jeans and trainers appropriate to wear? Where in the Bible does it say that you have to wear your Sunday 'best' to church? Another area has to do with the format and time of the services. Would a later time be more convenient? Is the lecture-style sermon format the best given the manner in which young people are learning? As immigrant children who were once members of the church have been killed by guns or been incarcerated, the church leadership at Willesden has had to re-examine their stance on issues of gun crime and outreach to people in the penal institutions. This has resulted in a thriving prison outreach ministry coordinated by a member who is a chaplain in one of the city prisons. The church's interaction with gun crime is twofold.[170] One, there is the implementation of an anti-gun crime initiative called 'Not one more drop of Blood", and also the church is one of the few churches in the area that conduct funerals for those killed due to gun crime. According to one of the

[166] Although many first generation members would have desired for the religious and cultural traditions to remain West Indian, they are aware of the need to change. A prominent theme among several first generation respondents was their children's apostasy. For although they were raised in the church, very few still have a fervent Christian belief and are involved in church.
[167] These are Bibles that have been bought or donated to the church for use during the Sunday and mid-week worship services. These Bibles are normally stamped with the church's address, and kept in the sanctuary.
[168] Although the Church of God headquarters in the US prohibit women from serving on the pastor council, Willesden has taken measures to change this by appointing two women as advisors to the council. Although they lack the formal title these women function in the same manner as the other ministers within the congregation.
[169] These leaders are both first and second generations. Having experienced the exodus of their children and their peers from the church, they see it as their duty to ensure that the church strives to remain relevant to the third generation. Failure to do so, as their past experience has shown, will result in them leaving.
[170] This is discussed in further detail in chapter six.

ministers, this is tangible way in which the church is able to establish contact with and give support to the families and the young people.[171]

Conclusion

The role that religious communities occupy within the lives of West Indian immigrant children, as well as their impact upon their lives cannot be understated. As they grow into adulthood, they are facing a diversified trajectory in terms of their integration within their 'home' societies. For many West Indian immigrant children their Black phenotype has resulted in the projected straight line assimilation being replaced by downward mobility and possible incorporation into the ethnic minority underclass. It is within this context that these religious communities provide them with the social, ethnic and religious tools needed to construct their identities and also navigate the terrains of the 'home' context. For those in Brooklyn, this is accomplished by providing an environment that fosters the construction of West Indian ethnic and religious identities and by so doing creates an alternative pathway towards socio-economic mobility and integration into middle class society. In London by contrast, the juxtaposition of the contextual realities with the cultural features within the religious communities has resulted in the immigrant children constructing hybrid identities that although incorporating elements of both, are wholly distinct and as such critiques both. In the political undertones, and the prominence of issues concerning roots/belonging, the immigrant children are simultaneously calling the society to re-examine those structures that continue to oppress and marginalize minorities and the religious communities to be more relevant within the present context. In this manner, the immigrant children are using elements from both environments to chart a new course of integration and engagement with the larger society.

As the immigrant communities in Brooklyn become more established within their urban context it will be important for them to begin to reevaluate praxis. For in creating a space where the West Indian ethnic and religious identities are normative, they are not only separating themselves from those in the wider community, but also possibly marginalizing some of the immigrant children in their midst. For these young people, this experience may result in their eventual exodus from these religious communities. It

[171] See notes on interview with second generation minister dated July 24, 2007.

is in this regard that the London churches may have something to offer to the US congregations. For having borne the impact of the exodus of the second generation due to their failure to engage with the issues that they find relevant, they are now in a place to testify to the necessity of engaging with the youth and the wider community in order to facilitate continuous growth in the church and the transference of the Christian faith to the next generation.

For the West Indian Pentecostal religious communities in both contexts, the coming decades will be decisive ones as a 'new' kind of immigrant children come of age. In the London context, these will be the younger members of the third generation and the yet emerging fourth generation. Within the New York City context this group will consist of members of the second generation who are currently children or in their early teens and the developing third generation. These immigrant children will be those who have 'grown up' on the proliferation of various multimedia and advanced technologies that have accompanied globalization, e.g. the internet, portable media players, etc. For many of these children, information is received through video clips and sound bytes and they 'have a say' in the decisions (parental and otherwise) concerning them. It is for these children that the current liturgical and cultural norms expressed in the forms of the one hour lecture-styled sermons, head covering, the prohibition on wearing casual clothes to church, and the unwillingness to discuss certain issues from the pulpit, may not be viable ways of articulating Christian belief. What will constitute viable forms of ministry for this generation? How will these churches engage with the society and these immigrant children? These are crucial questions, and answering them may call these religious communities to critically re-evaluate who they are, for at its heart, this engagement will call for the incarnation of their theology and praxis. In such a manner that the church's theology and praxis takes on certain aspects that enables it to be expressed in a format that the immigrant children can relate to and also understand.

Chapter six: Led by the Spirit

Mission within West Indian Pentecostal Churches

> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:19 – 20, KJV)

> But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8, KJV)

Introduction

In an examination of Christianity, one notes the profound link that exists between its expansion and human migration. Throughout the biblical text and in the books written on the history of Christianity one is confronted with numerous examples of people who migrated to new contexts and formed settled communities through which various religious beliefs were practiced and disseminated.[1] For some of these migrants, the impetus for their relocation was due to forces beyond their control (various socio-economic and political developments, persecution, slavery, etc.), however for many others, their migration was a 'voluntary'[2] response to a divine mandate. It is crucial to note however that these two distinctions cannot be treated as mutually exclusive, for in certain cases both can play a pivotal role in the decision to migrate. One arena in which the convergence of these distinctions is observed is within immigrant religious communities in the Diaspora.

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[1] According to Andrew Walls, the migration exhibited within the biblical text can be categorized into two types: punitive or redemptive. Punitive migration, a kind of forced migration, occurs due to some kind of wrong doing, and thus is marked by dislocation and deprivation. Redemptive migration in contrast emerges out of a call –a divine mandate to leave. So although this migration also produces a loss of home, it is more voluntary in nature in that the final decision to stay or to leave resides with the migrant. Andrew Walls, 'Mission and migration: the Diaspora factor in Christian history', *Journal of African Christian Thought* 5, no. 2, (December 2002): 3-12.

[2] Although the decision in this case lies with the migrant, there is also the sense among many of these migrants of being compelled by the Holy Spirit to go and fulfil the divine mandate or calling. See: Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004 [1983]).

In recent years there has been a plethora of discourses about the demographic shift within Christianity from the North to the South. To the extent that scholars predict that the beliefs and practices expressed within the southern continents may have a greater influence on the Christianity typical of the twenty-first century.[3] Coinciding with this emergence of Christianity as a non-Western religion has been the proliferation of various global/local forces aimed at uniting the world into one global community - marked by the increasing permeability of nation states boundaries to the movement of people, goods and ideas, and where ebbs and flows in one area directly impacts those in other areas.[4] It is within this globalizing context that we observe a dramatic surge in the post-1960s global migration from the South to the more developed nations of the North.[5] It is also within this context that one locates the emergence of various expressions of Non-Western or Southern Christianity in the North. For as many of these immigrants relocated to the developed countries in search of a better life, they not only carried with them a vibrant Christian faith fashioned within and excavated from the experiences and developments of

[3] Andrew F. Walls, *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 85; Alister E. McGrath *The Future of Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2002); Philip Jenkins *The Next Christendom: The coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); and Viggo Mortensen, 'What is happening to global Christianity?' *Dialog* 43, no. 1, (2004): 20-27. In acknowledging this shift it is also necessary to state that this development is itself a product of migration and mission. For the growth in adherents to Christianity observed on these continents underscores an undisputed fact that the existence of 'a great family of churches in all parts of Asia and Africa and the islands of the sea [is] the fruit of the missionary effort of the past two hundred years'. See: Lesslie Newbigin, A *Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Missions* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1994), 10.

[4] See: Manuel Castells, et al., *Mobile Communication and Society: A global perspective* (Cambridge: Massachuetts Institute of Technology Press, 2007); Robert Flanagan, *Globalization and labor conditions: working conditions and worker rights in a global economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Bill Bigelow and Bob Peterson, eds., *Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World* (Milwaukee: Rethinking Schools Press, 2002); David Held, ed., *A Globalizing World? : Culture, economics, politics*, 2nd ed., (London: Routledge in association with the Open University, 2004 [2002]); Samir Dasgupta and Ray Kiely, eds., *Globalization and After* (London: Sage Publications, 2006); and Gerard Delanty, *Citizenship in a global age: society, culture, politics* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000).

[5] The impetus for this global migration is multifaceted and includes: economics; socio-political dynamics; historical linkages; familial dynamics etc. See discussion on reasons for migration in Chapter 3: Island Dreams and Diaspora Realities. Although the re-evangelization of the North by Southern Christians may currently be seen as being limited in its practical outcomes, it provided us with a glimpse of one development that may have a profound impact on the Christian belief and practice in the twenty-first century.

their homeland, but also what they perceived to be a divine mandate to re-evangelize the North.[6]

In this chapter I will investigate how two such groups of migrants – West Indian Pentecostals in New York City and London, are conceptualizing and practicing mission within their new social contexts. It should be noted that this analysis will be conducted in the context of the Pentecostal communities in which they are involved. In order to accomplish this task, it will be necessary to first give a brief overview of Pentecostalism and some of its most instrumental models of mission. Second it will also be imperative to investigate how Pentecostalism and these specific models of mission fit within the West Indian religious landscape that fashioned the faith of these immigrants. As such, the analysis of the Pentecostal churches in New York City and London will be conducted in relation to the information gathered above. Some of the pertinent questions to be addressed are: How are these religious communities conceptualizing and practicing mission? How has this conceptualization and practice of mission being influenced by issues of identity? How is the West Indian immigrants' perception of a divine mandate translated into various mission oriented activities both within the immigrant church and the wider community? What are some of the challenges that this conceptualization and practice of mission pose for the immigrant Pentecostal churches and the wider society?

Pentecostalism and mission

In recent years, there has being much debate among scholars of Pentecostalism as to the theological and geographical origins of the movement.[7] Some scholars, particularly David Allen, traced the origin of the movement to Edward Irving and the Catholic Apostolic Church of 1832.[8] For some scholars, priority is given to Charles F.

[6] For many Non-Western Christians, the North has historically being perceived as the bulwark of Christianity. However due to their encounter with the increasingly secularized and pluralistic social contexts, they have come to see this perception as a fallacy.

[7] According to Cecil Robeck, this debate is primarily political since 'denominational, cultural, racial and ethnic agendas, as well as call to conform to certain standard of political correctness, are only a few of the agendas that have been brought to bear on the discussion of Pentecostal origins'. See: Cecil M. Robeck Jr., 'Pentecostalism and Mission: From Azusa Street to the Ends of the Earth' in *Missiology: An International Review* 35, no. 1, (January 2007): 76.

[8] David Allen, *The Unfailing Stream: A Charismatic Church History in Outline* (Tonbridge: Sovereign World, 1994), 80 – 92; Although Gordon Strachan states that the Pentecostal movement began with outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Topeka Kansas, he does note the striking similarities that exist in the

Parham and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Topeka Kansas in 1901,[9] while others give reference to the African American preacher William Seymour and the Azusa street revival that took place in Los Angeles in 1906.[10] Still for several others like Carl Brumback, the Pentecostalism movement can "call not man … father"[11] since it was due to a sovereign move of God. For Brumback, "the absence of a progenitor of our own Movement [is the indicator] that this mighty revival was begotten by an extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit".[12] According to Robert Anderson, the task of finding a distinctive geographical location for the origin of the movement is in itself problematic since similar revivals were also experienced in Wales, India, Egypt, China, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand around the same time as the Azusa Street revival.[13] The quest for a singular place of origin becomes even more challenging given the myriads of theological strands that have contributed to what Pentecostalism has become. As a result, some scholars have argued that although any number of factors can be identified as contributing to the emergence of Pentecostalism, particular attention should be given to the theological factors from which the movement drew its energy.[14] However this focus can itself be problematic because as Edith Blumhofer argues in regards to Azusa Street, the giving of priority of position to any place or theological factor may result in making "the historiography of Pentecostalism surprisingly contentious because adherents generally embrace a particular version of the revival's story and [thus] engage parts of its

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experiences exhibited in both places. See: Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973), 13 – 19.

[9] Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving*, 19; and James R. Goff, *Fields white unto harvest: Charles F. Parham and the missionary origins of Pentecostalism* (London: University of Arkansas Press, 1988).

[10] Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals: The Charismatic Movement in the Churches* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972); Edwin Villafañe, *Liberating Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993); Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); and Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988)

[11] Carl Brumback, *Suddenly … From Heaven: A History of The Assemblies of God* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), 48

[12] Ibid.,

[13] Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism*, 45, Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 302.

[14] See Walter Hollenweger cited in Cecil M. Robeck Jr., 'Pentecostalism and Mission: From Azusa Street to the Ends of the Earth' in *Missiology: An International Review* 35, no. 1, (January 2007): 76.

legacy rather [than] the whole".[15] Such criticism requires particular attention given the current prominence and influence of Pentecostalism within World Christianity.[16] Having acknowledged this caution, it is needful to state that given the focus of this research it will be necessary to locate this discussion within the events of Azusa Street and American Pentecostalism because it constitutes the origin of the Pentecostalism manifested both within the West Indies and the Diaspora.[17]

Having briefly discussed the origins of Pentecostalism, we can now examine what were some of the models of mission that were exhibited within the movement. It should be noted that particular attention will be given to the models as they relate to the Azusa Street Revival. The missional thrust and models used within Pentecostalism are multi-faceted. As such, this portion of the chapter will focus on three models of mission that have aided the growth and/or perpetuation of the movement: the work of the Holy Spirit; eschatological beliefs; and the legacy of black spirituality.

For several scholars, the work of the Holy Spirit constitutes Pentecostals' most strategic and influential model of mission in that it has resulted in the renewal of the recognition of the indispensable role of the Spirit as power-for-mission and the importance of the miraculous and numinous within any mission strategy or model.[18] One place primarily responsible for this restoration was the Azusa Street Revival that took place in 1906, in Los Angeles. Within the Azusa Street Revival, the work of the Holy

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[15] Edith Blumhofer 'Azusa Street Revival,' *The Christian Century* 123, no. 5, (March 7, 2006): 22. For Dale Irvin, this caution is expressed as not making 'Azusa Street - or any other local event in Pentecostal history – the determining factor for Pentecostal histories elsewhere in the world'. Dale Irvin 'Pentecostal Historiography and Global Christianity: Rethinking the Questions of Origin,' *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 27, no. 1 (spring 2005): 44.

[16] Such a criticism is especially valid when one notes that some forms of Pentecostalism do not owe their origination to Azusa Street or American Pentecostalism. With reference to African Christianity see: Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[17] Robert Beckford, *Dread and Pentecostal,* 171. See chapter 2 page 51, and pages 182-189 of this chapter.

[18] Paul A. Pomerville, *The Third Force in Missions* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1985); and Gary B. McGee, 'Pentecostal and Charismatic Missions' in James M. Philips and Robert T. Coote, eds., *Toward the 21st Century in Christian Mission* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998 [1993]). In this manner Pentecostalism has helped to confront a Western mentality that had long dismissed the work of the Spirit as legitimate elements within mission strategy or models. See: David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 242. Although the emphasis on a new birth by the Holy Spirit was reclaimed during the Reformation, it still did not play a very significant role in Protestant Theology. The neglect of the role of the Holy Spirit in missions is also seen in: Roland Allen, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960) and Harold Lindsell, *An Evangelical Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1949).

Spirit was articulated in the concept of the baptism of the Holy Spirit[19] and evidenced by speaking in tongues or glossolalia.[20] It was this baptism that indicated that a person was 'ordained' and equipped with the gifts of the Spirit which enabled them to fulfil the divine task which they were given.[21] Intricately linked with this baptism, was the Holy Spirit's function as the one who indwelt and illuminated the believers, and also worked the process of sanctification within them. Thus whereas external influences, especially godly ones, can exert a certain amount of influence upon an individual, the Holy Spirit by indwelling the person is able to achieve even more influence, "because, [by] dwelling within, he can get to the very center of one's thinking and emotions, and lead one into all truth".[22] In terms of the development of the Christian life, it is the Holy Spirit who "guides the believers from spiritual birth to maturity".[23] An integral part of this development is the sanctification process, in which the Holy Spirit facilitates the ongoing changing of the believer's heart and the renewing of their mind to seek after the things that are righteous in God's sight. Thus as a result of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, believers were endued with power from on high to live a life pleasing to God, fulfil a divine mandate and evangelise the world. As a result of this baptism, the believers who were previously marginalised and excluded from ministry due to their lack of education, social status or race now found themselves empowered and equipped for

[19] There is a controversy within Pentecostal circles in relation to baptism. Are individuals baptized *of* the Holy Spirit or *in* the Holy Spirit? For most people, the controversy surrounds how one should translate the Greek preposition *en* in the biblical passages concerning the Holy Spirit's baptism. [Some of these Bible passages are: Acts 1:8, 2:1-4, 4:31; 8:14-17, 38,39; 9:17; 19:1-7] One argument involves a locative interpretation – baptism *in* the Holy Spirit. As such, Christ is the one who baptizes, the "Holy Spirit is merely the sphere into which we come". See John F. Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965 [1954]), 147. Further support is provided by the argument that since the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in the believer at the point of conversion this baptism is in fact '*in* the Holy Spirit'. Other Pentecostals hold to the instrumental interpretation, where the baptism is argued to be *of* the Holy Spirit. Here the Holy Spirit is viewed as an instrument of Christ, his agent fulfilling his work. As such "baptism while accomplished by the Holy Spirit is also a work by Christ". See John F. Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, 148; Donald G. Bloesch, *The Holy Spirit*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000); James D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, (London: SCM Press Limited, 1970); and Howard M. Ervin, *Spirit Baptism,* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987). For this thesis, the phrase baptism of the Holy Spirit will be used. For most of the adherents of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements, the Holy Spirit was viewed as the agent who came upon them and produced the baptism. Although, this was a work is accomplished in accordance to the will of Christ, it is done through the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

[20] This doctrine was formulated by Charles F. Parham at the Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas.

[21] Gary B. McGee, 'Pentecostal and Charismatic Missions', 46.

[22] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 889.

[23] Ibid., 880.

ministry. In this manner they were inaugurating a new Pentecost, and with it a new movement within the church.

Intricately linked with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the speaking in tongues is the second mission model – eschatological beliefs. Throughout most of church history, eschatology or the theology of 'last things', has been a topic of ongoing debate, friction, and great speculation.[24] For Christians, eschatology invites them into a process of not only grappling to find a balance between the 'already' and 'the not yet' – the kingdom of God that has already broken into our existence and that which is to come, but also where to locate the second advent of Christ within this discussion.[25] For the believers at Azusa Street, the issue of the 'last days' became an area of primal importance and a major model in their missionary strategy. As a result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, early Pentecostals believed that they were living in the 'last days' and it was their duty to prepare the world for Jesus' return. For many of them, glossolalia, or speaking in tongues, was initially thought to be xenoglossa, i.e. speaking a 'real' foreign language that was previously unknown to the speaker.[26] Thus, speaking in tongues was perceived as a means of God miraculously "equipping them to make known to every tribe and nation the urgent news that the Last Days were at hand".[27]

Speaking in tongues was also believed to be a sign in several ways. To the universal church, it was a sign "of the restoration of the 'early rain' of apostolic power and

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[24] Discussions about purgatory, heaven and hell, millennialism – in regards to pre-millennialism, post-millennialism and a-millennialism, and speculation about the return of Jesus Christ have all resulted in debates, church growth, personal salvation of various believers, church splits, the Reformation, etc.

[25] Refer to scriptures like Mark 1:15 and Matthew 7:21, which highlight these two dimensions. The kingdom of God as a reign that has began with Christ's coming, and also one which has a future dimension. The Second Advent is interpreted in several ways. Pre-millennial interpretation believes that Jesus will return before the thousand-year reign. Post-millennialist in contrast, believe that Jesus will return after the thousand year reign. A-millennialists do not believe in a literal reign at all. For more information on Eschatology refer to the following texts: William C. Placher, ed., *Essentials of Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003); Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001); and Hans Schwarz, *Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000).

[26] James R. Goff, *Fields white unto harvest*, 72; Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism,* 90-92.

[27] Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Reading Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1995), 87.

gifts being restored in a 'latter rain' for missionary activity".[28] In regards to the unbeliever, speaking in tongues was interpreted as being "equivalent to prophecy",[29] and thus capable of facilitating conviction within the unbeliever when it was spoken in their presence. For the believer, it was evidence that they had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, bestowed with gifts for ministry and was a part of the bride of Christ.[30] This baptism however was not to make the world morally, politically and socially good. No, this empowerment was for evangelization – that the nations would hear the gospel. Thus with the Second Advent believed to be at hand, the participants at Azusa perceived themselves to be the agents God would use to usher in its inauguration. In *The Everlasting Gospel,* Faupel confirms the significance of eschatology to the missionary thrust found in the early days of the movement. He states:

> The United States certainly was not the extent of the Azusa vision. Whereas Parham seemed intent on the evangelization of the North American continent before heading overseas, adherents from Los Angeles began thinking in global terms from the outset. …Sensing the nearness of the return of Christ, workers feeling called to the foreign field were reluctant to wait for Parham's appearance on the scene. When Parham sent word that his coming would be delayed, a number decided to set out on their own.[31]

Being convinced that the new Pentecost had come in their midst and the imminent return of Christ was fast approaching, several of the participants at Azusa Street were sent out with the Pentecostal message.[32] The urgency to carry the message to others did not only apply to those who were officially commissioned by Azusa Street. In fact, many people who came in contact with the revival at Azusa felt called to go and witness to their experience.[33]

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[28] Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology. Supplement Series; 1* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 111.

[29] Ibid.

[30] James R. Goff, *Fields white unto harvest*, 51-55.

[31] David W. Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought*, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology. Supplement Series; 10* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 219 – 220.

[32] Within six months of beginning of the revival, thirty-eight foreign and home missionaries were commissioned. See: Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism,* 72.

[33] Thus ministers, foreigners, and visitors to Los Angeles returned home with the Pentecostal message. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity,* 40; 57-59; Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism,* 69-77; Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, 56-59; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements of*

The third model of mission noted within Pentecostalism and specifically the Azusa Street revival is the legacy of Black spirituality. This spirituality or Christianity has its origin in the lives of the slaves who were forcibly taken from Africa and brought to the Americas.[34] Within this context, the slaves took various elements of the Christianity presented to them by the whites and their African religious heritage to produce a 'tertium quid' – a religion that was distinctively different from its main contributors.[35] This new religion was one that emphasised the numinous in personal and public forms of worship, narrative theology, oral liturgy, and maximum participation in many aspects of the religious community. According to Cheryl Jones, the "oral-narrative dynamic allows for the Christian 'story' to be integrated with life experiences. It gives a 'voice' to every believer inasmuch as it is the responsibility of everyone to participate in the telling of his or her experience".[36] Within such a framework, both theology and belief are forged in the context of the community of faith – and the lived experiences of its participants.

Associated with the narrativity of theology is an oral liturgy. One key element of this oral liturgy is that every member is a full participant. Jones states that "such a liturgy bridges the gap between laity and professional".[37] The result was perceived to be equality within the body of Christ, and the restoration of belief of the priesthood of all

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the Twentieth Century, 2nd ed., (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 103-106. According to Robert Anderson, even the 'recent migrants to Los Angeles who were converted to the new movement returned to their hometowns, impelled by a belief common among the early Pentecostals that they had an obligation to bear witness of their experience to their friends and relatives'. See: Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism*, 71.

[34] There is some debate about exactly how much continuity exists between African religious practices and the Black church in the US given the manner in which slavery facilitated an environment in which slaves were stripped of there culture and their ties to community and family. See: E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964 [c 1963 University of Liverpool]); Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (New York: Harper & Bothers, 1941); Gayraud S. Wilmore *Black religion and Black radicalism: an interpretation of the religious history of African Americans,* 3rd ed., (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998); and Albert Raboteau, *Slave religion: the 'invisible institution' in the antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

[35] Wilmore, *Black religion and Black radicalism*, 18, Raboteau *Slave religion*, 4 -5; and James Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues: an Interpretation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 29 -30.

[36] Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 87.

[37] Ibid., 89.

believers.[38] The dynamics built into the revival at Azusa Street served many functions in the lives of the participants. It brought to prominence the concept of wholeness found in black spirituality as well as the ecstatic worship. According to Faupel, "[Parham, due to] his experience at Topeka, …sought to strip [the movement of] the excessive demonstrations of emotion [the Pentecostal] message tended to evoke".[39] For Seymour however, drawing upon his black heritage, these emotional expressions had tremendous value and were thus encouraged. Along with the emotional expressions, Seymour also "believed Spirit-baptism to be part of the atoning work of Christ".[40] This atoning work was not limited to the proclamation or even speaking in tongues. The fullness of the atonement of Christ was modelled in lives that reflected a return to wholeness – "the human family, pure and happy".[41] Since the baptism of the Holy Spirit was available to everyone, regardless of race, education or gender, anyone could be used to communicate God's message. Thus Pentecostalism provided them with a space to speak, a place where their voice would not be muted due to lack of education, gender, race or social standing. Thus, many people who had been marginalized within the society found a sense of dignity, empowerment, identity, and community.[42]

Pentecostalism within the West Indies

As noted in chapter 2, the islands of the West Indies functioned as an arena in which various cultures of the world interacted and in the process were changed into something distinctively unique and entirely West Indian.[43] One prominent feature involved within this interaction and transformation was religion. In this regard, the advent of Pentecostalism within the West Indian religious landscape can be perceived as a continuation of a process in which the islands had been involved for centuries. Using the models of mission discussed above, this section will investigate how this process of entry and transformation was navigated in regards to the Pentecostal Movement. It is

[38] This belief was later revealed to be idealistic in light of the persistence of certain gender roles, leadership hierarchies, racial distinctions etc.

[39] David W. Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought,* 210.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid., 211.

[42] Robert Maples Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited the Making of American Pentecostalism*, 69.

[43] Refer to pages 22 – 23 of this thesis.

necessary to note that the scope of this discussion will focus on Pentecostalism within the Jamaican context because it was within this religious context that the immigrant churches studied in New York and London had their origin.

When Pentecostalism arrived in the West Indies in 1909, it found a religious landscape that was able to accommodate many of its beliefs and practices. It is noteworthy that the first Pentecostal 'missionaries'[44] to the West Indies were Rebecca and Edmund Barr, black Bahamians, who upon receiving the Pentecostal experience in Florida returned to their homeland to share the message.[45] Therefore from its inception, we are provided with a glimpse into the possible trajectory that Pentecostalism would take in its integration into the West Indian religious landscape.[46] Within the Jamaican context, the movement's entry into the society was facilitated by one major antecedent – Revivalism.[47] Although Austin-Broos is correct in arguing that the Holiness Church of God[48] which arrived on the island in 1908, served as a 'theological forerunner' it did not constitute the basic framework that enabled Pentecostalism to be inserted and to thrive within the Jamaican religious landscape. That position was occupied by Revivalism. For

[44] The term missionary is used here to call attention to the evangelistic fervour that propelled the Barrs to return to the Bahamas. In this manner they continue a process that began at Azusa Street in which after receiving Spirit baptism, several foreigners who lived in the city felt compelled by the Holy Spirit to take that experience back to the homelands. It is in this manner that they functioned as 'unofficial' missionaries – having not being sent out by an official Pentecostal body.

[45] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 197.

[46] Although Pentecostalism in its various forms was introduced in the island predominantly by 'white' missionaries, it was the Jamaican preachers who were responsible for its dissemination among the population. See: Diane Austin-Broos, *Jamaica Genesis: Religion and the Politics of Moral Orders* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 96-114.

[47] Within Revivalism, adherence to certain beliefs and the engagement in various practices – such as 'magical rites' and communication with spirits are perceived to be for benevolent purposes – to produce healing, success in hazardous situations, etc. See: George Eaton Simpson, 'Jamaican Revivalist Cults' *Social and Economic Studies* 5, no. 4 (December 1956). As a religious organization, Revivalism was never sanctioned by the state. As a result membership within this organization can be interpreted as resistance to the status quo on various levels. For the majority of its adherence however, affiliation with Revivalism was combined membership in one of the established Christian denominations.

[48] The Holiness Church of God was introduced to the island by George Olson, an American of Swedish descent. His arrival in Jamaica was in response to a letter sent in 1907 by Isaac Delevante to the Holiness Church of God in Anderson, Indiana describing the devastating earthquake that had occurred in January 1907 and also appealing for missionaries. One distinct belief associated with the Holiness Church of God was – 'sanctification or 'holiness' through the in-filling of the Holy Spirit'. This in-filling, manifested itself in the 'capacity to abstain from sin,' was received quietly, or as one practitioner describes it 'as an 'intellectual' experience'. See: Diane Austin-Broos, *Jamaica Genesis,* 97-98.

as Barry Chevannes argues Revivalism facilitated the creation of a space through which Pentecostalism could be incorporated into the Jamaican religious landscape and as a result "one is tempted to argue, [that] Myalism[49] has once more shed its garb and is now wearing Pentecostal clothes".[50] Revivalism, an indigenous Jamaican religion, was the product of the fusion of Myalism and Christianity.[51] A key feature within Revivalism is spirit possession. According to Barry Chevannes, "spirit possession is a sign that one already has a special relationship with the particular identified spirit".[52] This experience of being spirit possessed normally occurs within the context of ecstatic worship and culminates in trances, glossolalia, prophecies and healing.[53] However, as George Simpson notes, for some practitioners – specifically the Leader, Captain or Mother, spirit possession can also occur outside of this context.[54] For the Revivalist, "the ideal life is life in the spirit"[55] - which ultimately results in an individual gaining victory over sin. Thus it is believed that "the Holy Spirit cleanses and redeems the believer, an act later celebrated by a baptismal rite".[56] Associated with this lifestyle was also the idea of empowering possession – i.e. the possession of the spirit would result in that individual being empowered to fulfil certain tasks. These include: conducting healing, communicating with the spirit (most times the process was facilitated through a dream), fulfilling a call to ministry, having the ability to pray; engagement in evangelism; and

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[49] This was an indigenous African-Caribbean religion practiced by some of the slaves during slavery. By incorporating various African religious elements, such as dances, ceremonies and shrines, the slaves were able to construct a belief system that allowed them to navigate the reality of their bondage. Incorporated within this belief system were certain Christian elements – namely the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and baptism by immersion. One important aspect within Myalism was healing – which was understood in both physical and spiritual terms. See: Noel Leo Erskine, *Decolonizing Theology*, 31; Patrick Hylton, *The role of religion in Caribbean History*, 172-173; Barry Chevannes, 'Introducing the Native Religions of Jamaica', 6-7.

[50] Barry Chevannes, 'Introducing the Native Religions of Jamaica', 9.

[51] Specifically the type of Christianity practiced by the Native Baptists which adhered to a literal interpretation of the Bible, oral theology and liturgy, belief in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and baptism by immersion. According to Shirley Gordon, within this group, 'manifestations of the spirit were more prevalent than the Bible message'. See Shirley Gordon, *God Almighty Make Me Free*, 129.

[52] Barry Chevannes, 'Introducing the Native Religions of Jamaica', 5. This is a spirit associated with either the Holy Spirit or a benevolent spirit within the African-derived pantheon.

[53] Jean Besson, 'Religion as Resistance in Jamaican Peasant Life' in Barry Chevannes ed., *Rastafari*, 61; and Leonard Barrett, *The Sun and the Drum: African roots in Jamaican folk tradition* (Kingston: Sangster's Book Stores, 1976), 57

[54] George Eaton Simpson, 'Jamaican Revivalist Cults', 352.

[55] Noel Leo Erskine, *Decolonizing Theology*, 105.

[56] Diane Austin-Broos, *Jamaica Genesis,* 63.

performing various leadership roles within the meetings.[57] In the articulation of the life in the spirit one also find the concept of holiness. According to a Revivalist preacher, "some people can't get the spirit because they are not clean. They are not pure; they have not lived the right way".[58]

Intricately associated with the prominence of spirit possession was an oral theology and liturgy. According to Kortwright Davis, Caribbean culture in general and Jamaican culture in particular is primarily an oral one. This feature is also noted within its folk or indigenous religions, of which Revivialism is an example. As a result, the "preference in this religious context is for narrative styles of communicating truths about the faith, as opposed to dogmatic, didactic, philosophical teaching styles".[59] Ultimately this created an environment where theologising was not limited to the activities conducted in 'holy places' – the church or seminaries. Instead it took theology in the experiences of everyday life – the homes, the fields, the streets.[60] As a result theology became an activity in which everyone was able to participate regardless of their educational qualification or economic status.

When Pentecostalism arrived in the models of mission especially those embodied in the work of the Holy Spirit, the legacy of Black Spirituality, eschatological beliefs, it found a space already prepared for its inception – primarily due to the significant parallels that existed between it and Revivalism. Thus the work of the Holy Spirit articulated in the baptism of the Holy Spirit evidenced by speaking in tongues found its contemporary in Revivalism's beliefs about spirit possession. Likewise, the narrativity of theology, orality of liturgy and expressive worship emerging from Pentecostalism's legacy of Black Spirituality found a mirror of itself in the West Indian[61] equivalent of such practices in Revivalism. In regard to the eschatological beliefs expressed within

[57] Ibid., 99, 105.

[58] Extract from a Revivalist sermon cited in Ibid., 100.

[59] George Mulrain, 'Caribbean' in John Parratt, ed., *An Introduction to Third World Theologies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 165.

[60] Ibid., 164.

[61] Like their American counterparts, West Indian slaves also re-interpreted the Western Christianity presented to them by their masters and the missionaries within an African framework.

Pentecostalism the point of similarity found with Revivalism was that following death the soul of an individual returns to God for judgement.[62]

As Pentecostalism located common elements within Revivalism that enabled it to find a position within the West Indian landscape, it also encountered a dynamic new society that called for its transformation. In what ways was Pentecostalism re-formulated within the Jamaican context? Using these three models of mission we will investigate some of the ways in which Pentecostalism was re-formulated within the Jamaican/West Indian context.

According to Noel Leo Erskine, one of the most fundamental questions asked within the Jamaican religious context is: 'What must we do to be saved?'[63] As a result, the central issue for many people is how to obtain freedom or salvation from sin, which "the church maintains [to be] the root cause of poverty, crime, and social and economic injustice".[64] Simultaneously as a result of the legacy of slavery and the abject poverty that ravages various sectors of the society, many people have come to "feel cursed and condemned".[65] Erskine states that "Jamaicans often characterize themselves as living with a sense of worthlessness and refer to their marginal existence as the consequence of God's punishment".[66] Within Pentecostalism this characterization of sin is further interpreted to encompass the world – which is believed to be under the devil's rule and therefore evil. For the Pentecostals in Jamaica, the singular solution to this problem was salvation – repenting, and accepting Jesus as one's personal saviour. Once converted, the believer was expected to live a sanctified life and abstain from the practices of the world.

The primary facilitator of this process was the Holy Spirit who indwells or possesses the sanctified believer. The distinctive expression signifying that an individual was sanctified and baptized by the Holy Spirit was speaking in tongues. Accompanying

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[62] It is imperative to note that this belief exists simultaneously with the West African concept of multiple souls. See: George Eaton Simpson, 'Jamaican Revivalist Cults', 346.

[63] Noel Leo Erskine ''How do We Know What to Believe: Revelation and Authority' in William C. Placher, ed., *Essentials of Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 35.

[64] Ibid., 36.

[65] Ibid., 37. This perspective can also be applied to the inhabitants of the entire Caribbean region. See section entitled "Self-Affirmation" in George Mulrain, 'Caribbean', 172-173.

[66] Noel Leo Erskine ''How do We Know What to Believe: Revelation and Authority', 37.

one's experience of Spirit baptism were strict moral requirements which was complemented by a eudemonic fervour. So while dancing, singing and engaging in activities associated with a 'free' lifestyle were prohibited within their daily lives, in the church, these elements were transformed into spiritually acceptable forms of celebration and expression. It should be noted as Austin-Broos correctly argues that, "the focus of Pentecostalism on personal salvation and interior experience manifested in embodied and highly portable forms of speaking in tongues and ritual dancing matched in religious terms [the] economic individuation" that has come to characterize the Jamaican economic sphere.[67] As a result, the significance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not really associated with empowerment issues, but with its function as serving as a distinctive marker that an individual was 'saved' and sanctified.[68] Within the Jamaican context this focus on personal evangelism was articulated in several ways: in daily lives of the members - distributing evangelistic printed materials, and witnessing; in the church[69] – having 'altar calls' during the services and conducting open air crusades.

As discussed in Chapter 2, throughout Jamaica's religious history certain branches of the church have functioned as a place for alternative representation for its populace, especially those who were marginalised within the society.[70] During slavery and emancipation, this position was occupied by the Moravian, Methodist and Baptist denominations that functioned as the slaves' allies in the fight for emancipation, economic independence and justice both during and immediately following slavery. However in the years subsequent to their emancipation in 1834, as the country

[67] Diane Austin-Broos, 'Jamaican Pentecostalism: Transnational Relations and the Nation-State' in André Corten and Ruth Marshall-Fratani eds., *Between Babel and Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 145. Prior to the twentieth century many Jamaicans worked on the plantations or small independent farms surrounding the free/emancipation villages. However beginning in the early twentieth century, many left that context to work in various regional, transnational and urban environments.

[68] It is necessary to state that this empowerment dimension continued to be important however it was perceived as a by-product of living the sanctified life.

[69] These kinds of activities are defined as personal evangelism. It is necessary to note that personal evangelism is not restricted to any context, boundary or time. Because it is conducted within the realm of daily life all activities become opportunities to 'save' a soul. Therefore mundane activities like going to work, the market or the beauty salon undergoes a process of transformation and become divine moments where salvation may come to some unsaved person.

[70] See pages 45 – 51 of this thesis.

experienced a severe economic recession,[71] these denominations were faced with diminished attendance among their membership. Although the Great Revival of 1860 resulted in some new converts being incorporated into the churches it also resulted in the resurgence/emergence of several African derived (like Obeah) and Afro-Christian religions (Revivalism, Kumina, etc). This development was also facilitated by an increase in political instability within the country. The result was that these denominations now became allies of the ruling elite. This alliance with the status quo was to become a dominant feature of not only Jamaica's but the regional expression of Christianity – to the extent that many Christians felt that it was not 'right' to openly question those in political leadership.[72] Thus "clergy from Britain who had once been radicals became clergy endorsing the colonial way, and the denominational churches in Jamaica, albeit as they grew in independence, became missionary training grounds for foreign clergy rather than sites of critical theology".[73]

When Pentecostalism entered the Jamaican religious arena it did so as a movement greatly influenced by its Black spirituality legacy and catering to the needs of the marginalised and disempowered. As stated earlier, its introduction into the island's religious landscape was facilitated by a movement – Revivalism – which by its very existence was anti status quo. Having highlighted these realities it is necessary to investigate where Pentecostalism fitted within the Jamaican religious spectrum. Pentecostalism found its home in an intermediate position between the established churches and the Afro-Christian religious groups.[74] As a result of its focus on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and expressive worship, Pentecostalism was perceived by some of the established churches and the populace to be very similar to the Afro Christian religions. Simultaneously however, it was also aligned with the established

[71] Simultaneously the country was also experiencing dramatic economic developments – primarily due to the loss of it's monopoly in exportation of sugar, the serious outbreak of cane diseases and natural disasters.

[72] This mindset is not limited to the Jamaican context but is prominent through the Caribbean region. Measures to change this mindset are now being developed as various scholars and churches within the region are engaging in critical theology especially in the area of liberation and decolonization.

[73] Diane Austin-Broos, 'Jamaican Pentecostalism', 144.

[74] It is in this location that Pentecostalism meets people at the heart of their distress and provides them with a place where their burdens can be relieved – i.e. through conversion; a new identity received – that of the saint; and empowerment gained – leadership etc. These features are especially important for the segments of the society that are marginalized – for example the unwed mother, the uneducated, and the poor. It is also noteworthy that because the Pentecostal churches had denominational ties to the US, it provided its adherents with a certain status within society.

churches in terms of its apolitical stance and seeking to preserve the status quo. Linked with this intermediary position was the continuation of an otherworldly or compensatory mindset. This mindset had being an enduring feature of both the Christianity that was taught to and practiced by the slaves and their descendants. Essentially this mindset admonishes the believers to orient their lives towards the things that are above, because it is in heaven that they will get their reward. As they await their reward, on earth they are to be hardworking and good moral individuals – who obey the authority which God has placed over them.[75]

As Pentecostalism became a part of the Jamaican religious landscape eschatology continued to play a significant role in its growth. For many of the sanctified believers, it became the constant reminder to live holy lives – for the second coming could occur at any time. In another manner, the impeding return of Jesus became the ongoing impetus to engage in evangelism. However, this evangelism was recast to focus on local and regional contexts. As a result very little attention was given to perpetuating the global thrust that had accompanied early Pentecostalism or the earlier mission ventures to Africa by the emancipated slaves.[76] One possible reason for this development was the pervasiveness of the dependency syndrome within both the Jamaican and the wider Caribbean contexts.[77] One consequence of this syndrome has being the short circuiting of self initiative among the believers – thus for many "mission was regarded as being what rich Europeans and North Americans did in the poor 'third world'".[78] Having eschatology play such a prominent role within their religious beliefs and practices served to keep its adherences primarily 'other-worldly' focused – looking "to a time when its

[75] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries,* 76-77, See also, Janice McLean, 'Enslaving liberators? An examination of evangelical missionaries in pre and post-emancipation Jamaica' a paper presented at the Yale-Edinburgh Conference July 3 – 5 2008.

[76] The two major mission trajectories that represent the exception to the focus on local and regional evangelization constitute the topic of discussion for this thesis. These are evangelism to the United Kingdom and to the United States. Early missionary ventures to Africa were conducted by emancipated slaves within the Baptist and Presbyterian denominations.

[77] This is noted in various areas of the society. The region is heavily dependent upon North America for its economic vitality – be it tourism, export and import goods and remittances. Within the religious arena, some churches and religious organization are very dependent upon affiliations with various agencies, individuals and churches outside of the region from which they received funds and other resources. .

[78] George Mulrain, 'Caribbean', 171. Such a premise is currently undergoing some changes within the Caribbean region as some Christians interrogate what it means to be involved in the missio dei – mission of God.

practitioners will transcend their current circumstances in a new role in the world as ritually felicitous beings".[79]

Mission within the Diaspora

Hitherto this chapter has briefly documented some ways in which mission was conceptualized and practiced within early Pentecostalism. This discussion was structured around the examination of three models of mission – baptism of the Holy Spirit, the legacy of Black Spirituality and eschatology – giving specific attention to how these beliefs were constructed within the Azusa Street context and then disseminated throughout its ministry in various parts of the world. Following that discussion, we investigated how Pentecostalism as expressed within these three models of mission was incorporated and re-formulated within the West Indian/Jamaican context. In this section we will analyse an on-going development in the discourse on mission within Pentecostalism – one facilitated by the relocation of West Indian/Jamaican Pentecostal adherents to the urban centres of New York City and London. How are these 'new' carriers of Pentecostalism conceiving and practicing mission within these urban centres? In the United States' context this question is especially informative because on one level this 'relocation' could be perceived as Pentecostalism returning to the shores from which it went out to change the world.

On an organizational level, all three of the religious communities involved in this research project conceived mission within the framework of the Great Commission:

> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:19-20, KJV)

For these churches the focal points in this passage are: go, teach all nations, and baptizing them in the name of the Trinity. These three activities are perceived to be intricately tied to evangelism and the 'winning of souls'. Several forms of evangelism are associated with this conceptualization of mission, namely: personal; public; local and international. Within the churches, mission as evangelism is communicated through two main forums – literary and oral. Therefore in the weekly bulletins, the visitor's welcome booklet, and

[79] Diane Austin-Broos, 'Jamaican Pentecostalism', 146.

the church's websites, visitors are told and the members are reminded that the primary aim of the church is evangelism. According to its website, Miracle Temple Ministries is "a growing ministry with [a] focus on winning lost souls for Jesus Christ".[80] For Willesden, the winning of souls is combined with a focus on discipleship with the aim that these people will go on to "Win and Disciple others".[81] In the oral format, mission as evangelism is communicated through various parts of the liturgy – the hymns and choruses, the sermons, and other parts of the service. One common feature noted during the services in all three churches was the 'altar call'.[82] This is an invitation made to those in the service who are not 'saved' to come forward and make a decision to accept Jesus Christ as their personal saviour. What is noteworthy about this invitation is not only its position within the liturgy but also what it communicates to those present in the service. In all three churches, the altar call occurred as one of the concluding elements of the church service, the others are the benediction and announcements. The altar call is structured in three parts – the invitation or appeal, prayer time; celebration/counselling. During the invitation, worshippers are reminded of the depravity of humankind, their need for a saviour and the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The invitation concludes with an appeal to leave the life of sin and come to the altar and accept Jesus Christ.[83] During the prayer time, those at the altar are led in reciting the 'sinner's prayer'.[84] Following this there is a time of celebration – thanking God for the new converts and counselling – where the new converts are taken into another room by a church leader to receive instructions on how to grow in their 'new' faith and discipleship.[85] The importance of this element within the church service is communicated by an informant in New York. He says:

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[80] See webpage: http://miracle-temple-ministries.org/43/index.html, accessed on May 12, 2007.

[81] See Willesden's webpage: http://www.wntcg.org.uk/index.htm, accessed on June 5, 2007.

[82] This practice of an 'altar call' is not restricted to Pentecostalism. Precursors can be found in the evangelical movement from the time of the American Evangelist Charles Finney and also in Revivalism. See: George Eaton Simpson, 'Jamaican Revivalist Cults', 354

[83] It is necessary to note that within certain contexts this invitation can involve a certain level of manipulation – where the 'unsaved' may be told that their failure to respond positively to this invitation may result in them not having another opportunity to do so before they die. And to die in such a context would result in them going to hell. This is normally done through sharing testimonies about such people.

[84] During this prayer individuals confess that they are sinners, repent of the sins they have committed, acknowledge that Jesus died on the cross to atone for their sins, accept that atonement and ask Jesus to come into their lives.

[85] This constitutes the beginning of a series of the new converts or discipleship classes which concludes with the water baptism by immersion of the individual.

> I love when they do an altar call. If they don't do an altar call on a Sunday morning I don't feel happy, I go home and feel that coming to church was a waste of time. But if they have altar call and one soul come, I feel more happy than anything, so winning souls is the most important thing.[86]

At the root of this conceptualization of mission as evangelism are several beliefs originating from within Jamaican Pentecostalism – namely an emphasis on salvation and its links with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and eschatology. Thus the perception of the world as depraved and under the leadership of the devil continues to occupy a prominent position within the theology, liturgy and life of the church and its members. Thus in the churches, members are admonished to remain separate from the world. For the churches the only solution to this problem of humanity is salvation in Jesus Christ. Thus for those who are saved – signified by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is their duty to go out and try to win others to Christ. With the addition of the belief in the imminent return of Jesus Christ, an urgency results that propels the believer to go out into the wider society to encourage sinners come to Christ and thus be saved from eternal damnation. Thus through the sermons, hymns and the altar call, the believers are reminded of the divine mandate that they have being given, and the eternal significance that is associated with them fulfilling that mandate. A by-product of this conceptualization of mission as evangelism is the perpetuation of an 'otherwordly' and apolitical mindset among many of the believers within the churches. Therefore the focus is on maintaining their separation from the 'bad' world, walking the straight and narrow so that they will be ready when Jesus returns and go with him to heaven.[87]

Having discussed how mission is conceptualized from an organizational perspective it is also needful to investigate how the individual members are conceiving mission. For the majority of the first generation immigrants in both New York City and London, the mission of the church was also conceived in terms of evangelism – winning souls. For one informant in New York, this was expressed as "the mission is souls … winning [those] who [are] lost at any cost. That is the vision that [the senior minister] has and

[86] 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn. Cited in: Janice McLean, 'Mission perspectives among Pentecostal West Indians religious communities in New York City and London: 'By My Spirit' says the Lord' in Stephen Spencer, ed., *Mission and Migration* (Hope Valley: Cliff College Publishing, 2008), 87.

[87] Associated with this focus of separation is the need to see the 'lost' being saved so that they too can go to heaven. So although a separation is maintained from the evil world, it is traversed occasionally in order to evangelize.

I've caught it ever since I came here".[88] For this informant and many others at Miracle Temple, this phrase – 'winning the lost at any cost' constitutes their mission statement and the modus operandum not only of the church in Brooklyn but the entire ministry in all of its locations. In London, a similar conception of mission is expressed. According to one informant who is a deacon and a member of the pastor's council in Willesden, the mission of the church is: "to win souls". He further states, "I suppose for Christ … the main agenda is for souls".[89] One dynamic noted in the informants' responses was the level of commitment associated with such a conceptualization. Evangelism becomes something that an individual does regardless of the cost – even the cost of one's family or one's life.[90] The deacon in London expresses this commitment in the following manner:

> [As] a Christian your main objective is for souls and if you have your family and just [be with] your family for the most of the time you won't please God because sometimes you have to leave them and go. I've heard about many ministers that leave their families and go, go preach, not that they don't love them but they've got a calling to go. I remember my first wife who was an evangelist, I'm sick in bed and she just cover me up and said okay I going out because she gave me my meal, I got my bath and she put me in bed, she did. Some people would say my wife is sick or my husband is sick I can't come out but Jesus said leave them [and] go. Cause you are leaving him or her in the care of the Lord.[91]

Among the immigrant children in New York and London, the conceptualization of mission as evangelism is also prominent. A second generation informant in London states: "you can't separate the mission of Willesden from that of the Bible which is you know the great commission but I, personally I think it's to expand the church. It is to sow the seeds of love and so that others would come to know Christ".[92] In New York this sentiment was also expressed in the following manner: "Our mission and sole mission and purpose is to win souls if you done anything else well you're not doing what you're supposed to be doing cause my thing is that it all about winning souls".[93] However in

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[88] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007.

[89] First generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.

[90] The scriptural reference used to support this viewpoint is Luke 14: 26 – 27.

[91] First generation male in London, dated July 11, 2007.

[92] Second generation female in London, dated July 19, 2007.

[93] Group interview in Brooklyn, dated April 11, 2007. Following this informant's statements concerning mission, the other members of the group were asked for their opinions on mission. The majority agreed with the statement that this informant had made.

both contexts, some immigrant children are interrogating and critically examining such a conceptualization. One informant articulated this process in the following manner:

> To be honest I don't know. The official mission, I don't know. I could say that my pastor has stressed. What he says is souls … souls for the Lord. I mean I can take from that whatever I want. I don't know. Things that I've noticed don't equal to what I've heard. … I mean souls for the Lord that's all good, that's all fine, but it has to start somewhere and I don't know if it's starting in the right place. I don't know if we're starting in the right place. We've been on this block in this church for probably 30 years but nobody from this block comes to this church except for handful of people. So … I don't know. …. I don't think all nations [are] here I don't see a percentage here from other nations. I do see a large amount of Caribbean people and I guess the way I'd take all nations is that everyone is welcome and I agree with that. [94]

For this informant the 'traditional' and prominent conceptualization of missions as evangelism needs to be interrogated. If souls are so important then why are members of the community and other nationalities so noticeable absent? Although this informant was able to accept the re-defining of 'all nations' to mean that all nations are welcome, simultaneously one still notes the underlying struggle that exists to find a conceptualization that allows for the synthesis of what is stated and what is practiced.

Within the London context, this interrogation of the conceptualization of mission was expressed in several forms:[95] advocating for greater community involvement, as well as acknowledging the need for change in the conceptualization of mission within the church. Informants communicated these perspectives as follows:

> I see our mission really to meet the needs of the local community. I mean there are some people that [see it as] having TV ministries and all that sort of thing which I think is good. But for me it's meeting the needs of the local people and been involved in community activities and community initiatives and being aware of the issues that are relating to people within the local community whether that be things like gun crime, single parent families, drug abuse. On the local level being a centre for people where they can come to for help and support.[96]

> I think this church as itself is looking for soul winning and a journey from birth to heaven. And in that journey trying to fulfil a positive lifestyle and morals, high standards, discipline and I think it's that journey getting towards heaven that's their mission, it is the mission of the church. The changes now I find is that the journey has changed

[94] Second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 15, 2007.

[95] The majority of those involved in the interrogation were second generation leaders and lay members.

[96] Second generation male in London, dated July 8, 2007.

> significantly from when I was growing up. It was a particular road that we went on and it was quite a narrow road and we stayed on that road then you just look for it and you got there. Whereas now it seems as if the road has very, various roads coming off of it, but we're all still ending up with the same place. … [Before] you took on whatever your parents told you and … you just took it on without questioning 'cause we weren't allowed to question. … We found [that a lot of] what they were saying … was tradition, culture, rather than Biblical. As we're growing and have grown so to speak now we're in a different era where your question things, you find out that Bible and tradition are two separate things and sometimes that becomes a little bit of a struggle, seems to be a contradiction to some people but that's the differences.[97]

Thus among the immigrant children in both contexts, we note that some measures of a re-conceptualization of mission as evangelism is emerging. The significance of this development not only in the churches but its engagement with the wider society is a topic for further study and interrogation. In the section that follows, I will address some of the possible causes for this re-conceptualization as well as examine some of the missional practices occurring within the immigrant family and the Pentecostal churches.

In both the New York City and London contexts, mission is practiced in a manner that is similar to the Jamaican/West Indian 'home' context. However it is necessary to note that this 'similarity' is exhibited in different degrees within the two contexts.[98] In New York, this continuation is seen in the perpetuation of personal and public[99] forms of evangelism. Among some believers, engagement in both forms of evangelism has come to be perceived as one of the main signifiers that an individual is a committed Christian. Simultaneously for some members, a distinction is made between what is considered to be every believer's divine mandate to evangelize – normally seen as personal evangelism and the public forms which is the duty of those who are called to evangelize. During a group interview, one informant stated:

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[97] Second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

[98] There are several reasons for the differences in the degree. One is the difference in the experiences that West Indian immigrants have had in both contexts. The second is the variation that exists in the types of ethnic identities that the West Indian family is re-negotiating and constructing. The third reason is the contexts themselves – have a distinct history in both their development and interaction with immigrants.

[99] This includes: open air evangelistic meetings, hospital and prison visitations, street and public transportation evangelism.

> Personally I'm not good at evangelizing. I am not the kind of person who willing get up and say okay let me go out there and preach on the bus. … I'm not that kind of person but if there [was a] push from here or somewhere I would do it.[100]

The response that he received from another immigrant who was the vice president of the youth group was: "then that's not your calling. You have to walk in your calling. You cannot walk out of your calling. Okay you see because you are a Praise and Worship leader you can't say well I'm going to do evangelism. No you stick to what God call you to do".[101]

In terms of public evangelism, it is necessary to state that due to the demographic composition of the Brownsville and Flatlands sections of Brooklyn, this form of evangelism is normally geared towards fellow West Indians and other minorities. Although both Miracle Temple and Flatlands are involved in public evangelism there remains some difference in the forms that it takes. In Flatlands, this is primarily street and public transportation evangelism. During this activity several members who are a part of the evangelism team of the church go out and preach and distribute tracts on buses and subway trains. The areas that are normally targeted in these ventures are those that have a large population density. Within Flatlands, the engagement of its members in these forms of evangelism is quite important because the results of these activities will eventually be incorporated into a church report that is submitted to the denominational headquarters.[102] For Miracle Temple, its public evangelism takes the form of hospital and home visitations. These activities are conducted by the deacons and the missionaries. Although both churches conduct open air evangelism, they are infrequent. The reasons given for this were due to the law regulating public gatherings that necessitated getting a permit from the police and all of the paperwork and processes that were associated with such a venture.

Among the West Indian informants in London, evangelism was predominantly articulated in terms of personal evangelism which was focused on the members of the Black community. Although the restricting of evangelism to the Black community, beginning in the 1960's and onwards was influenced by the anti-social and noise

[100] Group interview, second generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 11, 2007.

[101] Group interview, 1.5 generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 11, 2007.

[102] This report documented the quantity to printed literature that was distributed and the number of conversions within the church over a certain time period.

pollution laws that were implemented during this period, it was primarily due to the discriminatory treatment immigrants received from the White community. One informant who was involved in planting NTCG churches said the following: "we actually targeted black people because on some white [people] doors, if you knock you would be insulted. … I'm not saying all of them were the same. But [as] the saying [states] once bitten twice shy".[103] Thus within the London context, new converts were primarily 'won' to Christ through the personal relationships that were established between themselves and the believers. In these relationships the believer becomes a source of support and assistance for the unconverted. This is facilitated by being there to offer a listening ear, counsel, advice and prayer for the individual when they encounter difficult times in their lives. For one informant, her coming to Willesden church and her subsequent salvation was as a result of the support and prayers that she had received. She states:

> I really struggle[d] [with] these Pentecostal people [laugh] so I say, "Oh Lord!" She [the believer] said: "Come, come to my church. Come and visit my church". It took about four years for me to yield[ing] and then you know the struggle in [the] my workplace was getting intensive. So one day I say, "Well I will go with you". But all the time she comes [to church services] and ask prayer for me, so one day I said "I'll go with you". I came.[104]

One particular dynamic that was noted in both contexts in regards to personal evangelism was the gender specificity that was involved. Thus women were encouraged to develop friendships with other women and men with men. In terms of public evangelism, sometimes this distinction was removed since this type of evangelism was conducted in public places and in teams. However in certain contexts, like house visitation, evangelism was normally conducted by mixed gender groups or according to gender distinctions. These precautions were put in place to protect both the church members and the non-believers and to prevent any disrepute from being applied to the evangelistic work – a common scripture used to justify this practice was 1 Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (KJV).

Another manner in which the practice of mission is reminiscent of 'home' is in the scope that evangelism takes within the churches – i.e. on local evangelism. What has

[103] First generation male minister in London, dated June 2007.

[104] First generation African female in London, dated July 11, 2007 cited in Janice McLean, ''By My Spirit' says the Lord', 88. In her interview, this informant spoke about experiencing several occurrences of discrimination from various co-workers on her job that served to make it a very difficult environment in which to work.

changed in both contexts however is the manner in which 'local' is defined. Whereas in the Jamaican context, 'local' evangelism was defined in largely spatial terms, within the Diaspora, this term has taken on some cultural appropriations. "Thus 'local' evangelism has also come to signify evangelism specifically to members of the West Indian community who may or may not live in your spatially 'local' community".[105] Although this nuanced definition of the term 'local' was exemplified by all three churches, here too as well there was some variation. On one level Miracle Temple Ministries can be perceived as embodying the international scope that is stated on the church sign, 'Miracle Temple Ministries For All Nations'. It has eight branches in three countries: two, including the headquarters in Brooklyn, in the United States; five in Jamaica; and one in Canada. The church is also involved in various mission trips to St. Vincent – one of the West Indian islands located in the Eastern Caribbean region. However, upon a closer investigation of the demographic composition within the branches and the targeted population on these mission trips it is noted that the majority are West Indians. Therefore although Miracle Temple Ministries can be considered to be international in its scope – i.e. having branches in several countries, it is still 'local' within a cultural and ethnic sense since its ministry is primarily focused on individuals having a West Indian background. In Flatlands, it was also this cultural/ethnic definition of 'local' that was observed. Therefore although the church is located within an area with a fair amount of minorities, the congregation is predominantly West Indian - many of whom travel from other communities in Brooklyn, as well as from Queens and Long Island to attend the church. One principal reason for the emergence of the cultural/ethnic definition of local evangelism is maintenance of various West Indian ethnic and religious identities that serve to continuously link the immigrants to their islands of origin while simultaneously distinguish them from the larger African American population among whom they live and work.

Although the redefinition of 'local' evangelism to incorporate the ethnic/cultural dynamic is also noted in London, it is not as prominent as within the New York context. For as the immigrant children – second, third and fourth generations – emerge and come of age they are facilitating a process in which the term 'local' is reclaiming much of its spatial/locational definition. The main catalysts of this change are the construction of

[105] Ibid., 89.

Black British identities among the immigrant children, their ascendance into various leadership positions within the churches, and their critical examination of how the church should function within its local context both now and in the future. As a result of these developments, Willesden is becoming a place where some members of the wider community are welcomed and supported. In the Willesden area, this is one of the churches were some of the young people who are killed in various gun fights have their funerals. According to one of the ministers, Willesden does this as a way to care for the community and to offer support to the grieving families. What is notable in this situation is that in many cases both the family members of the deceased and many of those attending the funeral may not have had any prior contact with the church. Willesden has also implemented two programs that cater to the needs of people within the community – a Friday Youth Club and a Community project for pensioners. Although both programs are currently funded by the Brent County Council, they are housed within the church buildings. The implications resulting from this relationship is complex. On one hand, Willesden may gain a certain level of visibility among the Members of Parliament, the law enforcement officers, and within the community as a result of being perceived as the 'face' of these community ventures. However, this visibility may also result in the church undergoing greater scrutiny in terms of its finances and allocation of other resources. Concurrently, this relationship also fosters an environment in which both the leaders and members of Willesden continue to interrogate what is the church's role in politics and the wider society. Arriving at a consensus among the leaders and members may be a difficult process given the historical background, generation, and identities of the church's membership. These community ventures are further complemented by several changes within the church geared towards making the church more welcoming to people who are not from a West Indian background. These include: prohibiting the use of patois in the services; implementing more contemporary styles of worship – implementing multimedia technologies into the services, thus replacing hymnbooks and pew Bibles; removing the restrictions that were placed on women apparel, especially wearing trousers and head covering.

One area where the churches in New York City and London are practicing mission in a manner that is different from their West Indian heritage is in their use of multi-media and other kinds of technologies. Through the World Wide Web two of the three churches are now able to get the gospel message to a wider audience, establish

communication and become a place of support and spiritual nurture for those who visit their webpage. On Willesden's webpage, a visitor is able to download Sunday messages, sign up for its weekly bulletins which are sent via electronic mail and submit their prayer requests. For all three churches, the significant role that multi-media technologies play in disseminating the gospel is indispensable. In Miracle Temple, the use of multi-media is primarily seen in the recording and dispensing of sermons on compact discs. However the sanctuary is already wired to use overhead projector screens and other technologies. According to one informant, "when … Bishop was erecting the new sanctuary from ground up, …the wires were run already, everything was put in the ceiling getting ready for this. So the vision was there and that all happened back in 2000 that we would use technology to get the gospel out".[106] In Flatlands it was noted that multi-media technologies were primarily used during the portions of the service that were under the leadership of the immigrant children – the weekly Praise and Worship and during some sermons. In Willesden by contrast, multi-media has become an essential feature in the Sunday Service since the overhead projectors and television screens have replaced both the hymnal and the pew Bible. The projection of the service onto the overhead screens and the television monitors has also enabled worshipers in the balcony and the back of the church to see and participate in what is happening during the service.

Given the prominence of the other worldly mindset within the churches in New York City, interaction with the community was conceived in terms of being a place of spiritual guidance and engaging in benevolent ministry. When informants from both churches were asked about the church's involvement in the community the majority of the responses were about the prayer meetings, and/or the benevolent ministries[107] that the churches are performing. One informant who is a deacon of one of the churches stated:

> We give things out, but we can't campaign near to us if other people campaign too, [because] people forget which person [is from which] outreach ministries. Also over at Brookdale Hospital a lot of people come over to our service, to a prayer meeting here … three days from eleven to one o'clock Monday, Wednesday and Friday. It's a good

[106] First generation female in Brooklyn, dated April 3, 2007 Ibid., 91. During fieldwork I was not able to ascertain why this technology was not being used.

[107] These include: visiting the sick, visiting prisoners, and distributing food and clothing to those who are less fortunate. In Miracle Temple, this distribution is conducted prior to or on Thanksgiving Day – the third Thursday of November. In Flatlands, this distribution was coordinated and conducted by the chairperson of the Evangelism committee.

> [thing] and everything is done to feed them physically and spiritually and it's an outreach ministry.[108]

For one informant the churches' lack of engagement in the 'practical' side of ministry is due to lack of space and also because a need for such a ministry does not exist in the surrounding community. This informant says:

> You might see that [as a] practical way to help community with food and all these other things, to have a soup kitchen. Well we don't have the sort of convenience right now. … You know you live in some area and you find that this is not one area that people gravitate to. … You know they're not too hungry. … We're all of those are things [having a soup kitchen]. We discuss and we think of the practicality of it, do we have enough room? Then you need to know you have people who should be able to serve in those areas so there [you] are. I mean if I have the ability that I could do this. … There're some things that right now I, I realize that we got to [do]. … We probably can extend ourselves a bit more … in the sense of the verbal, you know verbal expression of the word you know and evangelism. … Of course that will entail people going and talking with people and people investing into people lives and relationship.[109]

In Willesden, this other worldly mindset is augmented by it active involvement within the community. This is in the form of the Community projects that were documented earlier and the inauguration of an anti-crime initiative called the 'Not one more drop of Blood'. Through this venture, leaders in the church meet periodically with the police about crime in the area and organized marches and campaigns geared towards highlighting the prominence of crime in the Black community, while calling for its reduction. Coupled with these initiatives, various church leaders participate in joint church meetings where they discuss some of the pertinent issues occurring within the community and draft several documents which are then presented to leaders within the community. Finally, although members are not told which political party they should support, they are encouraged to become involved in politics – especially taking up membership on the council boards.

[108] First generation male in Brooklyn, dated April 22, 2007.

[109] First generation male minister in Brooklyn, dated March 2007.

Challenges for mission within the Diaspora

Having examined some of the ways in which mission is being conceptualized and practiced within the Diaspora by West Indian immigrants, it is also necessary to investigate some of the challenges associated with the conceptualization of mission as evangelism and the practices that accompany such a formulation.

One telling critique that has been levelled against Pentecostalism in general and these specific immigrant congregations in particular is their focus on the 'spiritual at the expense of being socially responsible and actively engaged within the socio-economic and political contexts in which they are located.[110] Pentecostal theologian Edwin Villafañe notes:

> While it is true that Pentecostalism has been recognized as a powerful force in evangelism, world missions, church growth and spirituality, it is equally true that their services and prophetic voices against sinful social structures and on behalf of social justice have been missing.[111]

The exception in some cases would be the social and political activities noted with certain Latin American Pentecostal churches. [112] Unfortunately this kind of social engagement for the most part had been a missing feature within West Indian Pentecostalism both within the region and in the Diaspora. As documented earlier, Pentecostalism in the West Indies emerged in a context where Christians were discouraged from publicly questioning their political leaders and the status quo. Instead, their attention was to be focused on issues of spirituality and how they could continue to be respectable, hardworking, law abiding citizens. When the immigrants relocated to various Diaspora contexts and began to establish churches, it was this religious heritage that became the substratum from which ministry and mission was and continues to be articulated.

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[110] Emmanuel Egbunu, 'To Teach, Baptise, and Nurture New Believers (i)' in Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross, eds., *Mission in the 21st Century*, 25-26; Andrew Lord, *Spirit, Kingdom and Mission: A Charismatic Missiology* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2002), 3; Allan Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 261.

[111] Edwin Villafañe, The *Liberating Spirit,* 202.

[112] For an overview of Latin American Pentecostals involvement in social action and politics see: Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 72 – 73. David Martin *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1990), 66; D.D. Bundy 'Chile' in Stanley M. Burgess, and Eduard M. Van Der Mass, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2002), 55 -57.

Therefore, one challenge for the churches will be to find a way of rediscovering the prophetic voices of their West Indian Christian heritage. These are the prophetic voices of the slave ancestors who re-interpreted the pacifying gospel message taught by the missionaries and white elite to produce a liberating message that transformed them from chattel slaves to children of God and thus entitled to freedom and liberty. The prophetic voices embodied in those segments of the West Indian culture that refused to be acquiesced and westernized. In re-discovering this religious past, the churches will first have to come to terms with how they have been shaped and what factors have resulted in their emergence. The churches will need to acknowledge and interrogate the various ways in which Pentecostalism, both within the West Indies and in the Diaspora contexts, has been and continue to be purged of these prophetic voices in its desire to attain respectability within the society. This in turn will assist them in coming to terms with those parts of their heritage they have been taught to dismiss and degrade – namely the Afro-Christian religions like Revivalism and other religious movements like Rastafari.[113]

Rediscovering their social activism heritage will also challenge immigrant Pentecostal churches to re-interrogate exactly what the great commission means. Is it just to evangelize or to see people and society transformed as they encounter the liberating presence of Christ?[114] For the churches in the New York context especially, it may mean re-evaluating the perceived ethnic and cultural barriers that continue to separate them from those within their communities and then taking steps to be a place where others are 'welcomed' not only physically but culturally and religiously as well. For Willesden, the challenge will be to sustain and further develop their social engagement in a manner that becomes the responsibility of all its members. For the churches in the Diaspora however, this journey of re-discovery will also mean acknowledging the ways in which Pentecostalism has facilitated America's ongoing spiritual and cultural hegemony within the region. For Willesden and Flatlands this is particularly important because on a denominational level, they are both governed by a leadership that is primarily Caucasian

[113] See Robert Beckford's discussion of embracing aspects on Rastafarianism within the expression on Pentecostalism within the British context. It is important to note that Beckford engages with these issues as a second generation West Indian male who is involved in the NTCG denomination. Robert Beckford, *Dread and Pentecostal: A Political Theology for the Black Church in Britain,* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2000).

[114] According to Ande Titre, "The aim of God's mission is the transformation of life, not only of individuals but also of the whole society, even the created order". See Ande Titre, To Teach, Baptise, and Nurture New Believers (ii)' in Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross, eds., *Mission in the 21st Century*, 37

American.[115] Although Miracle Temple is independent in terms of its leadership there is still a need to interrogate the manner in which its conceptualization and practice of mission has been influenced by American Pentecostalism.

Another challenge posed for the immigrant churches in terms of their conceptualization and practice of mission is the place of the immigrant children. One phrase that was periodically heard during fieldwork was, "a church without young people is a dead church". As the immigrant families continue to reside in the host country and the immigrant children continue to construct identities heavily influenced by their contemporary context it will be important for the churches to begin to revisit both their belief and practices concerning mission. For as the Pentecostal churches in London have realized, the perception of the world and its systems as evil and their subsequent withdrawal into sacred spaces may have served to alienate the church from the young people both within and outwith the church. This is a development which resulted in the exodus of several members of the second and later generations from the churches. As a consequence, many of the young people and teens who have West Indian ancestry have no association with the church. For some scholars, this development may be perceived as evidence that the immigrant children have become assimilated into the context of the wider British culture. However to do so would be to render the young people who left, voiceless – unable to critique the church in which they were raised and nurtured. This is a loss that the NTCG are currently trying to come to terms with. In this regard, churches in London present the immigrant churches in New York with a mirror in which to examine themselves to see the possibilities that may lie ahead in the future. For both churches it will be imperative to grapple with how to live out the reality of being a 'child of God' – not in a manner that maintains the holy 'us' versus the evil 'them' dichotomy but instead creating a place for meaningful interaction between both individuals. It is in this venture that the immigrant children may be the church's most valuable resource. In

[115] According to one informant at Willesden, there is a lack of understanding within many local NTCG churches about this dynamic. For many members, denominational leadership is associated with the national NTCG, without realizing that the NTCG is also a part of the CoG denomination. Although Flatlands is under direct CoG organizational leadership – the reality of white leadership is still divorced from the lives and experiences of most of the members. This is because the leadership at the levels – local and regional - where the where the majority of the members interact with the denomination is predominantly Black. In both Willesden and Flatlands, exposure and awareness of the white American organizational leadership of CoG comes with the attendance of church leaders to the general assembly held once every four years. See interview with second generation female in London, dated July 9, 2007.

that they may be the ones who will spearhead the process of extricating tradition from orthodoxy and seeking to find various modes of articulation that facilitate the inception of religious beliefs and practices within the contemporary contexts. Two areas in which this extricating process will be meaningful are in worship and leadership. What will constitute 'meaningful' worship within Diapora contexts, both now and in the future? In the area of leadership, how can it incorporate the contextual issues found within the host society in a manner that enables the church to cooperate with other Christian communities as well as give a listening ear to what "non-Christians have to offer and to criticise"?[116]

Simultaneously these Pentecostal immigrant congregations in New York and London exist within a period of dynamic changes within World Christianity - such that the rhetoric of reverse mission has become a staple within academic discourse. Reverse mission or mission in the reverse examines the spiritual dimension which accompanies and influences the movement of Christians primarily from the Non-Western world to the West. For many of these immigrants, this spiritual dimension is communicated in terms of having a divine commission to reinvigorate or re-Christianize the growing secularized nations to which they owe their Christian heritage.[117] Associated with this term is an ideology which, "if taken seriously- would turn the traditional relationship between African-European, not to mention the responsibility that go with it, on its head".[118] For, on one hand, 'reverse mission' calls into question many of the stereotypes that Westerners have of Non-Westerners. Simultaneously it also facilitates a re-orientation of the axis of association between the West and the majority world, so that the Non-Western nations now become the centre and the West the periphery.

Although migrant communities have helped to revitalize church attendance in certain places, further interrogation of the pervasiveness of this revitalization in terms of the host communities is required. Is the revitalization interpreted primarily in the overall statistical increase in the amount of people attending church or charting a change in the

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[116] Walter Hollenweger, *The Future of Mission and the Mission of the Future*, Occasional paper no. 2, (Birmingham: Selly Oak Colleges, 1990), 5.

[117] Gerrie ter Haar, 'African Christians in the Netherlands' in Gerrie ter Haar ed., *Strangers and Sojourners: Religious Communities in the Diaspora* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 167-171.

[118] Gracie Davie, *Europe: The Exceptional Case: parameters of Faith in the Modern World*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 2002), 110

religious practices in non-migrant population? Associated with this process is the ongoing transformation of the relationships that exist between the Christians of the Non-Western and Western world. For as Lesslie Newbigin states:

> We need their [the Non-Western Christians] witness to correct ours [the Western Christians], as indeed they need ours to correct theirs. …For they have been far more aware of the danger of syncretism, of an illegitimate alliance with false elements in their culture, than we have been. But whether it is we or they, we imperatively need one another if we are to be faithful witnesses to Christ.[119]

The challenge therefore for the West Indian immigrant churches in New York and London is to discover where they fit in this process. Although these churches were established before many of the religious groups that are the focus of the current discourse their presence adds another dimension to the debate. What can they learn from and contribute to the ongoing debate about interaction with the host society? In this regard, there is also need for greater interaction and cooperation between those immigrant churches that are already established and those that are just emerging on the scene. This interaction – specifically between African and West Indian immigrants will demand that they critically examine the causes for the perpetuation of the disunity that has persisted between them. How can their common heritage as believers of African ancestry become a means of overcoming these divisive issues and facilitate the emergence of forums of collaboration?

Conclusion

In the coming years, it is projected that the face and practices of World Christianity will continue to undergo profound changes. However unlike the 20th century, the driving forces behind these changes will be emanating from Non-Western Christian contexts. One arena in which these changes will be manifested is in the emergence and growth of Non-Western Christian communities in the Western nations. For as many of the Non-Western immigrants relocated to the developed countries in search of a better life, they not only carried with them a vibrant Christian faith fashioned within and excavated from the experiences and developments of their homeland, but also what they perceived to be a divine mandate to re-evangelize the North. Armed with a

[119] Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 147; See also: Andrew Walls, 'Afterword: Christian Mission in a Five-hundred-year Context' in Andrew Walls and Cathy Ross., eds., *Mission in the 21st Century*, 204.

religion able to cross boundaries and a divine mandate, these immigrant churches searched for creative ways of carving out and creating space for the conceptualization and practice of mission. For West Indian immigrant churches, this is done by drawing upon the West Indian Pentecostal heritage fashioned from the re-formulation of American Pentecostalism within an Afro-Christian framework and followed by its insertion into the regional religious landscape. As a result the mission conceived and practiced by these Pentecostal immigrant churches was primarily evangelistic – and geared towards redeeming a fallen world for its creator. Simultaneously however, these immigrant churches were also undergoing various changes as they find their conceptualization and practices of mission being challenged by various agents inside and outside of the churches.

Within the churches, this challenge was embodied in the immigrant children. Having being born and raised in the Diaspora, these immigrant children desired to see the church become a place where various cultural traditions gave way to creative ways in which the church can actively interact with the contemporary contexts by re-discovering its prophetic religious past. Outside of the church, the challenge is articulated in terms of seeking for greater co-operation between various immigrant churches, e.g. between West Indians and Africans, and the host churches. For as Andrew Walls correctly asserts, we need each other in order to be the body of Christ in the world.[120] Given the challenges that are arising and the current discourse in academia, it is warranted to say that the years ahead will possibly be ones of questions and interrogation for these West Indian immigrant communities as they continue to seek to be led by the Spirit in the contemporary contexts in which they exist.

[120] Andrew Walls, 'Afterword: Christian Mission in a Five-hundred-year Context' in Andrew Walls, and Cathy Ross., eds., *Mission in the 21st Century*, 204

Chapter seven: Conclusion

Living their Faith

"If religion is to flourish, the needs and conditions, the fears, the anxieties, the hopes and aspirations to which it is addressed must be real in the experience of the believer".[1]

Summary and conclusion

It has been argued throughout this thesis that to perceive immigrant religious communities as existing primarily as 'colonies' or inward-looking communities is problematic. First, by adhering to such a perspective, one may continue to perpetuate the identification of these religious communities within the wider society as a foreign entity whose value is quantified only in relation to its deviation from the ascribed norms of the society. In doing this however, one may run the risk of overlooking the ways in which the host society also contributes to the creation and proliferation of these perceived 'insular' organizations. Second, such conclusions fail to seriously consider the importance of these religious communities within the lives of immigrants. For as this thesis and the above-mentioned quote by C. Eric Lincoln indicate, these religious institutions thrive because they address many of the felt needs of the immigrants. In the process, they become places that facilitate the immigrants' adaptation to the host society while simultaneously maintaining various transnational ties with their home country. By highlighting these particular issues, this thesis has sought not only to analyze an ongoing development within World Christianity but also address several areas that have been largely neglected in the academic discourses within the United States and Britain. For although several scholars are engaged in examining how faith communities are influencing the post 1965 migrants to the United States, their attention is predominantly focused on Hispanics, Asians and Africans[2] – the ethnic groups that constitute the largest

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[1] C. Eric Lincoln, *Race, Religion and the Continuing American Dilemma,* rev. ed. (New York: Hill & Wang, 1999 [1984]), 61.

[2] Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, eds., *Religion and the New Immigrants;* Michael W. Foley, and Dean R. Hoge, *Religion and the New Immigrants*); Tony Carnes and Anna Karpathakis, eds., *New York Glory*; Theodore Louis Trost, ed., *The African Diaspora and the Study of Religion*; Jacob K. Olupona and Regina Gemignani, eds., *African Immigrant Religions in America; and* Afe Adogame, and Cordula Weissköppel, eds., *Religion in the Context of African Migration.* Two exceptions are: R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner, eds., *Gatherings in Diaspora* , where one chapter is dedicated to Rastafari and Haitian Voodoo, and Delroy A. Reid-Salmon, *Home Away From Home.*

percentage of recent migrants. As a result, the impact of faith communities amongst West Indian migrants has been largely neglected.[3] Within the British context by contrast, several scholars have investigated and documented the role that faith communities play within the West Indian population.[4] However, the majority of the studies have been centred on the experiences of the first generation with minimal attention given to the influence of these faith communities among later generations.[5]

Throughout this thesis, the examination of immigrant faith communities was conducted within the context of three Pentecostal churches in which some West Indian migrants residing in New York City and London participate and was centred around two prominent themes: One, the manner in which these religious communities facilitated the construction and re-negotiation of ethnic and religious identities among three generations of West Indian migrants; two, the role that these communities play within the conceptualization and practice of the term mission within global and local contexts. In order to analyse these two themes however, it was necessary to address two preliminary areas. The first was to briefly review the process by which various ethnic and religious identities were formulated within the West Indian context. This re-examination, documented in chapter 2 highlighted the multiplicity of the players involved and some of the factors that have made these identities a reality. Thus when the Africans, British, Spanish, Americans, and other nationalities interacted within the framework of slavery, colonization and Christianization, the result were several West Indian ethnic and religious identities. Central to the identities was a characterization marked by cultural and religious dynamism, as well as an aptitude towards survival and adaptation in the midst of adversity. As these specific features of the ethnic and religious identities became embedded within the ethno-cultural and religious DNA of the West Indian population, they provided the foundation for the interaction between the immigrants and the new context.

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[3] Within the majority of the studies on West Indian migrants in the US the role of the faith communities is given only a cursory glance. Nancy Foner, ed., *New Immigrants in New York;* Mary C. Waters, *Black Identities*; Constance R. Sutton, and Elsa M. Chaney, eds., *Caribbean Life in New York City.*

[4] Joe Aldred, *Respect*; Roswith I. H. Gerloff, *A Plea for British Black Theologies ;* Malcolm J.C. Calley, *God's People;* Clifford Hill, *Black Churches ;* Grant Paul, and Patel Raj, eds., *A Time to Speak*; and Nicole Rodriguez Toulis, *Believing Identity.*

[5] One exception that included some discussion on West Indian youth is Selwyn Arnold, *From Scepticism to Hope.*

The second issue explored was the factors that had contributed to the relocation of the migrants and the emergence of the immigrant Pentecostal churches. In chapter 3, it was argued that when investigating migration, immigrants and the related faith communities, room has to be given for a diversity of perspectives. In this regard, this chapter sought to critique the dominance of the economic rhetoric - i.e. push-pull model - within the empirical studies on West Indian migration, by highlighting the role that the historical economic interaction between the West Indies and other countries, the proliferation of certain 'images', immigration laws, and the family played within the migration process. It is only in examining all of these factors that one gains an adequate picture of why many West Indian immigrants chose to migrate. In discussing the emergence of the West Indian faith communities, a multi-dimensional approach was also critical. This is because immigrant faith communities like other social organizations, are actively involved in a process where they are simultaneously influencing and been influenced by the context in which they are located.[6] Thus when the immigrants encountered various discriminatory ideologies, structures, and practices within the US and British societies that were directed towards the minority populations among whom they were classified, they utilized their ethnic and religious resources to create spaces of belonging, empowerment, and survival.[7] This took the forms of ethnic enclaves, and social organizations – specifically religious communities. This chapter also highlighted the ways that the host context contributed to the formation and maintenance of various transnational ties. In this regard this chapter served to document some of the ways in which migrants were able to articulate what it meant to be a West Indian Pentecostal in a foreign land. As a result, West Indians were also able to find a voice which sought to correct the negative stereotypes and give words to their position as sojourners in a foreign land.

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[6] These dualistic elements are not distinctive to only Christian communities but are also evident within other religious communities. See Adam Unterman discussion of the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox traditions within Judaism and Alford T. Welch's presentation on Islamic movements. Adam Unterman 'Judaism' in John R. Hinnells ed., *The New Penguin Handbook of Living Religions* (London: Penguin Books, 1998 [1997]), 37-44; Alford T. Welch in Hinnells ed., *The New Penguin Handbook of Living Religions*, 208-222.

[7] In the US context, the creation of space was expressed as distinguishing themselves from the African American population and being perceived as the 'model' black person – hardworking, respectful etc. Within the British context where such a distinction could not be made, the West Indian migrants forged ties with other minorities groups and became some of the activist demanding social and political changes within the society.

In chapters four through six, the two major themes of this research, namely identity and mission, were considered. Particular attention was given to the role that Pentecostal communities played in the West Indian migrants' engagement with these themes. Chapter 4 illustrated the manner in which these faith communities fulfil a multiplicity of functions within the lives of the first generation. In the perpetuation of the rituals and religious beliefs from the home context, the first generation found a place where their West Indian culture and values are celebrated and treated as normative. In the circle of believers, they found a family that was ready to support them in various forms – socially, financially, legally etc. These faith communities also provided a space where their ethnic and religious identities were re-negotiated. This chapter also demonstrated how the construction and the internalization processes whereby boundaries are legitimized and identities are articulated among first generation migrants occur within a migration framework. For the first generation West Indian immigrants examined in this chapter, these processes involved using the ethnic and religious identities from their countries of origin to negotiate what it meant to be a West Indian Pentecostal in a foreign land. As a result of carving out this unique space the first generation continues to call the host society to acknowledge their presence, not just as foreigners and thus the 'other' but as a viable and important segment of the society.

In chapter 5, it was argued that the role that religious communities play in the lives of West Indian immigrant children cannot be understated. For in a context where ethnic minority youths are facing a diversity of trajectories in terms of their integration within the host society, including downward mobility and incorporation into the ethnic minority underclass, the religious communities provided them with many of the social, and religious tools needed to navigate the terrains of adolescence and adulthood. In the Brooklyn context, this was demonstrated by providing an environment that fostered the construction of West Indian orientated ethnic and religious identities. In doing so, the immigrant youth was able to develop an alternate pathway towards social mobility and integration into middle class American society. In London, the juxtaposition of the contextual and cultural features within the religious communities has resulted in the construction of hybrid identities that not only incorporate elements of both features but also critique certain features as well. Thus located within many of these identities is the prominence of issues concerning roots/belonging and the need to actively engage with the host society. It is in this manner that the immigrant youth calls society to re-examine those structures that

continue to oppress and marginalize minorities, and the religious communities to become more relevant to the present context – by giving sufficient consideration to some of the issues influencing their lives. Within this chapter the intergenerational critique of the West Indian Pentecostal church was given particular attention. It was structured in the format of: investigating some of the ways in which these institutions empowered and disempowered children and young people; and discussing some of the ways in which the children and young people are challenging the church in terms of its worship, organizational structure, and rituals.

Chapter six which focused on the term mission, sought to highlight some of the dynamics that have accompanied the well documented demographic shift in world Christianity, particularly the emergence and proliferation of non-Western Christian communities in Western nations. For as many immigrants relocated to the developed countries in search of a better life, they not only carried with them a vibrant Christian faith fashioned within and excavated from the experiences and developments of their homeland, but also what they perceived to be a divine mandate to re-evangelize the North. Armed with this supernatural authorization and a religion that is able to traverse national boundaries, these faith communities are engaged in a process where their conception and practice of mission is undergoing dramatic changes. For the West Indian religious communities, the Pentecostal heritage fashioned from the re-formulation of American Pentecostalism within an Afro-Christian framework have not only resulted in mission being conceived and practiced as evangelism but also as social engagement with the wider society.[8] This chapter also demonstrated how some of these faith communities functioned as sites where global and local dimensions exerted influence upon the conceptualization and practice of mission within the host context. Thus while mission activities may be global – i.e. initiated within several national contexts, they may be centred on a particular immigrant population. As a result, the terms 'global' and 'local' have become nuanced in their definitions as religious beliefs and practices that are 'local' to the home context are translated to the global contexts of the host societies. This translational process is one of dynamism and constant negotiation – as the faith communities functioned as sites where the ideas emanating from the home and host society are able to critique and influence each of the contexts.

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[8] One of the main agents behind the incorporation of social engagement within the conception and practice of mission is the immigrant young people.

In conducting this research, this thesis has sought to undertake an examination of Pentecostal communities among West Indian migrants in New York City and London, in the hope that it will encourage further discussion about the manner in which Christianity is being appropriated by various religious traditions within contemporary contexts. In striving to fulfil this goal, I will conclude this chapter by highlighting some of the areas in which further academic research is warranted.

One area requiring additional research is: youth, religion and globalization. As the world has become an increasingly connected unit, the significance of religion has not diminished, instead it has become a crucial marker of identity,[9] a space for social and cultural formation as well as a medium through which various traditional practices and beliefs are re-appropriated. Coinciding with these developments is the dramatic demographic shift in the centre of gravity of World Christianity from the Western countries to the non-Western ones. As a result, most of the world's youth now reside in the very areas where Christianity has the majority of its adherents.[10] Therefore, if we are to understand Christianity within the contemporary contexts and speculate about what its practices and process will be in the twenty-first century, we will need to focus our attention on the religious lives of young people. As a generation, the youth constitute the frontline in terms of cultural and social change.[11] Thus it is their engagement with Christianity, its ideas, and institutions that will reveal not only the future of religious beliefs and practices, but also the extent to which it will be resilient, innovative, and adaptable in relation to wider global, social

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[9] Within many migrant communities these are increasing transnational in nature.

[10] According to the Youth and United Nations website, 85% of the world's youth live in the Non-Western world. This includes 62.4% in Asia, 14.1% in Africa, and 9.3% in Latin America and the Caribbean. See website: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm, accessed October 29, 2008.

[11] Acknowledgement of this reality is evident in the plethora of studies within academia on youth and children. See: Panayota Papoulia – Tzelepi, Søren Hergstrup, and Alistair Ross, eds., *Emerging Identities among Young Children: European Issues* (Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books, 2005); John Cotterell, *Social Networks in Youth and Adolescence* (London: Routledge, 2007); Kip Pegley, *Coming to You Wherever You Are: MuchMusic, MTV and Youth Identities* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2008); Roxanne Varzi, *Warring Souls: Youth, Media, and Martyrdom in Post-revolution Iran* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). The importance of youth within the society is also highlighted within various governmental reports. See: UK government Green Papers, *Youth Matters* (July 2005) and *Youth Matters Next Step* (March 2006). Websites: http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/Youth%20Matters.pdf, http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/3804D7C4B4D206C8325EA1371B3C5F81.pdf, accessed November 22, 2008. Also see the National Survey on Drug Use and Health reports on teens that focus on various subjects like underage drinking, mental health, drug use etc. Website: http://ncadistore.samhsa.gov/catalog/results.aspx?h=drugs&topic=10, accessed November 22, 2008.

and cultural developments. Within this framework, it will be necessary to investigate how youth are appropriating faith in a variety of contexts – giving particular attention to those areas that have not garnered much research within academic discourse, i.e. the non-Western world[12] and the Diasporan contexts. Although this research has highlighted some of the ways in which some second and third generation West Indian children are appropriating faith and challenging the doctrines, rituals and organizational structures of immigrant faith communities, it was focused on churches within a Pentecostal tradition. Therefore additional research is needed to explore how West Indian immigrant children are appropriating faith within mainline churches as well as in other Diasporan contexts, for example Canada. Finally, in exploring the relationship between youth, religion and globalization, attention needs to be given to the role that media, advanced technology and the internet plays within this interaction.

Another area requiring further research is the immigrant church in Diasporan and global contexts. As this research has revealed, this institution is pivotal in the lives of many immigrants. Given its prominence it will be imperative to investigate how these institutions are assisting their members to navigate some of the realities that accompany immigrant life, especially in regards to marriage, gender politics within the home, and the presence of female clergy. Associated with this area is the interrogation of the manner in which these immigrant faith communities can be seen to represent the frontlines of a possible theological and power shift within World Christianity. As these churches become inserted within the fabric of the host community they are exhibiting dynamic financial strength as they raise funds[13] to purchase their church building and other commercial properties.[14] In this regard,

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[12] One prominent question that will need to be addressed is: How are youth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America appropriating their Christianity in terms of global developments and their local ethno-cultural and religious dynamics? One book that highlights some of the ways in which these issues are being addressed especially within the Non-Western context is: Donald E. Miller, and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (London: University of California Press, 2007), 68-98.

[13] This fundraising is conducted locally or with assistance from the parent church in the home country.

[14] See Scott Farwell's article 'Nigerian Church brings noise, passion to Texan town' dated Saturday June 21, 2008. In this article Farwell documents how over the past eight years the Redeemed Church of God has purchased 700 acres of land and several homes, built an elementary school size church and a parking lot. See website: http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/yahoolatestnews/stories/062108dnmetnigerians.435c001.html?npc, accessed November 22, 2008. The Redeemed Church's activities within the commercial arena have also being documented by Dr Afe Adogame in his paper 'Towards a 'Christian Disneyland'? Negotiating Space and Identity in the New African Religious

some of these immigrant churches are debunking some of the stereotypes that have persisted about non-Western people, and their financial status. Alternatively, many of these immigrant faith communities are interacting with the host communities from a perception of orthodox Christianity that is constructed with a non-Western framework. By so doing there is the re-emergence of the "cultural variety and plurality of idioms [that] were inscribed [within] the original character of Christianity".[15] The implications of the re-emergence of these qualities coupled with the growing financial strength of contemporary immigrant faith communities upon the Diasporan and global contexts, as well as the future of World Christianity is an area that will require further research.

Diaspora' presented at the 2008 Gwendolen M. Carter Conference, February 15-16, 2008, University of Florida, Gainesville. It is necessary to note however the Redeemed Church's economic ventures are not unusual, as other churches within the US are also involved in such activities. One such church is Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem New York which has a development corporation. See Website: http://www.adcorp.org/, accessed November 22, 2008.

[15] Lamin Sanneh, 'Conclusion: The Current Transformation of Christianity' in Lamin Sanneh and Joel A. Carpenter, eds., *The Changing Face of Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 214.

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Oral Interviews

For the interviews documented below, pseudonyms will used to preserve the individual's anonymity. The only exceptions will be the interviews with the senior ministers, who names will be recorded.

New York City

1. Anthony, second generation male. Interview by author, 19 Aril 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is about twenty two years old.

2. Barry, second generation male. Interview by author, 1 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is about twenty seven years old. He is a Sunday school teacher and a member of the church choir.

3. Dave, 1.5 generation male. Interview by author, 15 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant came to the US in his early teens, he is now about seventeen. He sings on the Praise and Worship team.

3. Grace, first generation female. Interview by author, 3 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is in her sixties. She holds multiple leadership positions in the church.

5. Group interview. Interview by author, 11 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This interview was comprised of nine informants. Two were designated as1.5 generation and seven were second generation. Four of the informants were in leadership positions. These included: leader and member of the Praise and worship team, Vice president of the youth group, and usher. The informants ranged in age from seventeen to about thirty-five.

6. Julie, second generation female. Interview by author, 15 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is seventeen years old. She serves on the usher board in the church.

7. Larry, second generation male. Interview by author, 15 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is in his mid-twenties.

8. Mary, second generation female. Interview by author, 22 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. Mary who is about twenty five teaches Sunday school and sings on the Praise and worship team.

9. Mathias, first generation male. Interview by author, 22 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is in his sixties. He serves as a deacon in the church.

10. Susan, first generation female. Interview by author, 13 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. The interview with this informant was conducted over the phone because she relocated to Florida. This informant is in her fifties. Prior to relocation to Florida, this informant was the president of the women's group.

11. Thomas, second generation male. Interview by author, 15 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant is in his late teens.

12. Vie, first generation female. Interview by author, 22 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. Vie is in her fifties.

13. Tracey, second generation female. Interview by author, 15 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. Tracey is about twenty five is the leader of the Praise and worship team.

14. Williams, Donald, first generation minister. Interview by author, March 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording.

15. Yvette , second generation female. Interview by author, 22 April 2007, Brooklyn. Digital recording. This informant in about twenty nine years old.

London

1. Ada, first generation female. Interview by author, 10 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is in her early forties and she serves as an usher in the church. Ada is from Nigeria.

2. Angela, second generation female. Interview by author, 19 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Angela is a pastor's child and is in her forties. She is the leader of the Gospel choir.

3. Carol, first generation female. Interview by author, 10 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant who is in her early seventies has been a member of Willesden since the 1960's.

4. Cleo, second generation female. Interview by author, 17 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Cleo is in her early forties. She has attended Willesden for most o her life. She is the youth minster.

5. Deborah, second generation female. Interview by author, 13 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant has being attending Willesden since her childhood. She is currently in her early forties.

6. Dorcas, first generation female. Interview by author, 17 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant who is in her seventies, is a minster and until several years ago was a pastor's wife.

7. Elizabeth, first generation female. Interview by author, 24 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Elizabeth is in her late sixties. She is involved in the community project for pensioners. In March 2007, she was presented with the Gloria Brown community award for her service to the community.

8. Eunice, first generation female. Interview by author, 16 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is in her early sixties. She in involved in the discipleship ministry within the church.

9. Franklyn, first generation male. Interview by author, 11 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Franklyn is a member of the pastor's council. He is in his late sixties.

10. Group interview. Interview by author, July 2007, London. Digital recording. This interview was conducted with eleven informants who ranged in ages from nine to thirteen. One was designated as 1.5 generation, two were second generation and eight were third generation.

11. Jennifer, third generation female. Interview by author, 9 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is about ten years old.

12. June, first generation female. Interview by author, 19 July 2007, London. Digital recording. June is in her mid-forties. She leads one of the women's groups in the church.

13. Karleen, second generation female. Interview by author, 22 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is a pastor's daughter. She is in her mid forties and serves on the Praise and worship team.

14. Kevin, second generation male. Interview by author, 8 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Kevin is a pastor's child. He is in charge of the church's educational ministry. Kevin is also part of the music ministry and a member of the pastor's council. He is in his forties.

15. Lewinson, Issachar, first generation minister. Interview by author, June 2007. Digital recording.

16. Mary, first generation female. Interview by author, 16 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Mary is in her late sixties and she is originally from Ghana.

17. Mavis, first generation female. Interview by author, 9 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is in her late sixties. She has been a member on Willesden since the 1960's. Mavis sings on the Church sanctuary choir.

18. Morris, second generation male. Interview by author, 12 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Morris has been attending Willesden since childhood. He is in his mid-thirties and he is involved with the Youth Club.

19. Paulette, second generation female. Interview by author, 9 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Paulette is an advisor of the pastor's council. She is in her mid forties.

20. Robert, second generation male. Interview by author, 24 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is in his mid forties. He is associate minister of the church.

21. Ronald, 1.5 generation male. Interview by author, 11 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Robert is originally from Jamaica. He is the administrator for the Community Project and the Youth Club. He is in his mid forties.

22. Tammy, second generation female. Interview by author, 16 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Tammy is a recent university graduate, and in her early twenties. She is involved in the music ministry.

23. Winston, first generation male. Interview by author, 19 July 2007, London. Digital recording. This informant is in his sixties. He is the custodian for the church.

24. Zechariah, first generation male. Interview by author, 9 July 2007, London. Digital recording. Zechariah is in his seventies and currently lives in Jamaica.

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'The Call of God to Ministry: A brief history of Bishop Ermine Stewart's fifty years in ministry,' May 2006.

'The Christian manner of dress,' a gospel tract distributed at Miracle Temple Ministries on March 29, 2007.

Willesden NTCG, Welcome booklet.

Willesden NTCG, bulletin for Sunday, June 3, 2007. This bulletin reminded members that the Rally would take place on Saturday June 9, 2007. It also documented specific information on which ministries would be involved and the date that the collected funds should be given to the leaders of these ministries.
Willesden NTCG, bulletin for Sunday, June 17, 2007.
Willesden NTCG, bulletin for Sunday June 24, 2007.
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